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ABSTRACT

Developed for at-risk youth and designed to help all students experience success in school and in the real world, this curriculum guide is presented in a large-size, loose-leaf format for easy access and use. The guide features a flexible, six-semester curriculum that builds literacy skills in students while developing their core worker competencies. It outlines reorganizing the classroom as a professional workplace setting, using computers as central tools of instruction, and involving the community and mentors. The guide's program emphasizes goal setting and career research and preparation. It also includes an evening class component for parents. After a preface and an introduction, chapters in the first part of the book (Program Coursebook) are: (1) The 21st Century Teacher; (2) Reaching Today's Learner; (3) The 21st Century Classroom; (4) Building Public Awareness; (5) The Mentoring Program; (6) Literacy Classes for Adults; and (7) Conclusion. Part II of the book (English for 21st Century Employment) contains the curriculum for each of the six semesters in the program. Contains the following Appendixes: Adaptations for Other Academic Disciplines; Preparing for High-Stakes Tests; Challenges of Computers in the Classroom; and Software Publishers. (Contains 45 references.) (NKA)

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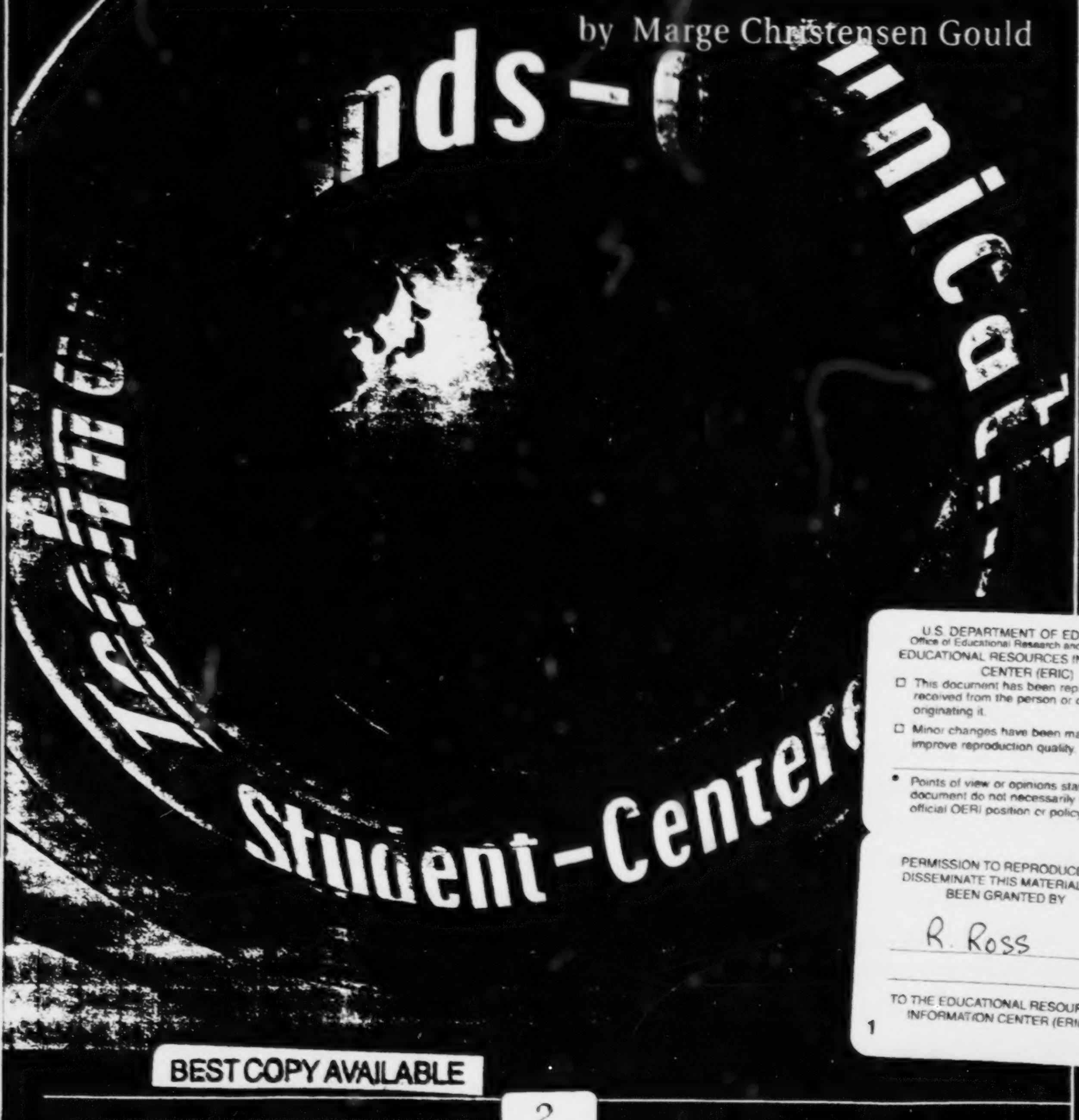
SECOND EDITION

Developing Literacy & Workplace Skills

Teaching for 21st Century Employment

by Marge Christensen Gould



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Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills:

Teaching for 21st Century Employment

Program Coursebook and Curriculum Guide
Second Edition

Marge Christensen Gould

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Bloomington, Indiana

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my husband, Dr. Herman Gould, who has been an invaluable help and encourager to me and represents to me all that's right with the world, and to my students, many of whom carry with them heavy burdens from what's wrong with the world. All of them have taught me that high tech is not enough in the classroom. High touch, or humanity, and high expectations are equally important.

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About the Author

Marge Christensen Gould is a high school English teacher with 28 years of experience in the classroom teaching English, special education, gifted education, journalism, and mass media. She has also taught adult literacy classes. Christensen Gould holds a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in administration and supervision in education.

For more than 20 years, she has worked with at-risk students in school districts in the Northeast and Southwest regions of the United States. For the past 14 years, she has taught and coordinated an innovative literacy and workplace skills program for at-risk students under the auspices of the Arizona Supreme Court and the Tucson Unified School District. The program, which has been exceptionally successful at an urban high school with a large multicultural population, focuses on helping youth with special needs to succeed in school and in the 21st century workplace.

She is the author of the books *Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment; Motivational English for At-Risk Students: A Language Arts Course That Works* (National Educational Service, 1992); *Reclaiming At-Risk Youth for the 21st Century Workplace*, a case study published in the *ASCD Curriculum Handbook* (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, December 1996); and numerous journal articles. She has been featured in articles in ASCD's *Curriculum Update* and *Curriculum/Technology Quarterly* and in *NEA Today*, and she has presented at several state and national literacy and education conferences.

Christensen Gould was one of the top 20 teachers in the United States named to the All USA First Teacher Team 2000 by *USA Today*. She was selected as an Arizona Outstanding Educator (2000–2001) by the Phoenix Suns and America West Airlines, and was named 2000–2001 Teacher of the Year for the University of Arizona/76-Circle K Outstanding Faculty Awards Program. In addition, her program for youth was awarded the first-place 2000 Golden Bell Award (9–12 category) by the Arizona School Board Association as an outstanding example of excellence in education and as a program that has a significant effect on student achievement. Her literacy and workplace skills program has served as a model for similar programs established in several other states in the U.S.

Christensen Gould is the founder and president of Educational ReadSources, Inc. (*www.edreadsources.com*), a nonprofit organization dedicated to effective classroom reform and the promotion of literacy and workplace skills for children at risk. Through Educational ReadSources, she offers 3-day professional development seminars for educators interested in creating programs similar to the one outlined in this book. For further information contact the National Educational Service.

Preface

In his freshman year, Jaime was placed into the alternative English program that I designed for at-risk high school students with poor literacy skills. That year, he was constantly in trouble with teachers and was suspended from school several times. His literacy skills were poor, and he had very little self-esteem or self-confidence. However, in this alternative program he improved his reading skills and was paired with a fantastic mentor. This mentor arranged for Jaime to start doing volunteer work after school and in the summer in the computer information systems department of the large Tucson hospital where he worked.

Jaime had become interested in computers through his daily work with them in my classes, and during his volunteer work he quickly learned to accomplish many complex computer tasks and procedures. The department head there was so impressed with Jaime's work that she hired him to work part-time throughout his senior year. As soon as he earned his high school diploma, he was hired there full-time and began to take evening courses at the local community college.

A few months later, one of our other mentors, who was employed by the same hospital, told me that the hospital's new CEO and president, who was new to our city, had heard about my literacy and job skills program and wanted to attend our year-end awards evening. She explained that Jaime had set up the CEO's computer and had enthusiastically told him about our program. It seems that the CEO was impressed not only with Jaime's computer expertise but also with his interpersonal skills and the ease with which he carried on a conversation.

Were it not for his experience in this literacy and job skills program and for the guidance of a wonderful mentor, Jaime would likely have fallen through the cracks. Like so many of his peers, Jaime might have become involved in criminal activity. Instead, he has a good job with a great deal of opportunity for growth and further education.

In 1987 I was asked to help design, implement, and teach the innovative alternative English program for at-risk students that had such an impact on Jaime. The program was initiated as a partnership between the Arizona Supreme Court and the Tucson Unified School District. The goal was to provide at-risk students with literacy skills and job skills in order to keep them out of the criminal justice system and help them develop workplace skills.

Our target populations included students on probation and parole, dropouts returning to school, students from troubled families, teens living on their own, high school students reading at or below the fifth-grade level, and ESL students who were falling behind their English-speaking peers. The program was designed around three fundamental changes in the traditional classroom: Students would assume the role of employees, the teacher would assume the role of an employer, and the classroom would become a professional office setting and innovative learning environment, complete with computers and software.

Although I was barely computer-literate at the time, I realized that the traditional classroom setting was no longer effective for at-risk students, and I wanted to help create a program that would help all students experience success in school and in the real world. Thus, I shed my role as a traditional English teacher in 1987 and assumed my new role as a manager and facilitator. My students assumed the roles of working professionals.

We quickly realized the need to expand the initial English program in order to help students become proficient in the reading, writing, thinking, and self-management skills they would need to succeed in higher education or in the workplace. The results from the 3-year program I designed and implemented have been far more positive than we ever imagined. Students have made average gains of two grade-level equivalents per year in reading comprehension and phonetic analysis posttest scores, resulting in average gains of six grade-years over the 3 years students are in the program. The students' written communication skills have often improved so dramatically that it is difficult to believe that writing samples from the beginning and end of a school year were written by the same student.

In addition, students have become independent, self-directed learners and effective team players. Their self-esteem and self-confidence have soared, and they have become much more poised. Many of my students have addressed large groups of educators, parents, members of the community, and civic officials.

Discipline problems are extremely rare because of the program's emphasis on personal responsibility. Students have truly accepted and taken ownership of the program. Over 65% of my program's graduates have continued on to some form of higher education beyond high school—a significant accomplishment given that Arizona has the highest dropout rate in the United States, and the county in which the school is located has a 62% graduation rate. Of the program graduates who continue their education, most attend community colleges, although several have completed bachelor's degrees. A few have joined the military; others are now employed.

In addition to offering high school English classes, this program includes evening classes for parents and other adults in the community. Students often attend the evening classes to help their parents and other adults with the computers and software. More than 550 adults have completed these reading and writing courses and earned college credits.

Finally, the program emphasizes goal-setting and career research and preparation. Students can participate in a mentoring program that pairs juniors and seniors with working adults. This program has been extremely effective, earning us recognition from former United

States Attorney General Janet Reno, *USA Today*, and the media, local courts, and the community in general.

For the past 14 years, I have applied the principles and philosophy in this book in my classroom, helping more than 1,600 at-risk high school students and more than 550 adult students experience success in school and in the high-tech workplace and gain hope for satisfying careers and better lives. *Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment* is based on 28 years of teaching experience that includes 20 years of experience working with at-risk youth in four high schools in the Northeast and Southwest regions of the United States.

While working on this book, I discussed classroom reform with hundreds of teachers and administrators throughout the country. These colleagues provided valuable feedback on the technology available in their schools; their concerns, hopes, and visions; their budgetary limitations; their administrators' attitudes toward teachers moving away from the traditional classroom model; and their schools' preparation of students for the workplace of tomorrow. Their insights have helped me design this practical, easy-to-use guide that will help you restructure and create your own 21st century classroom and design a curriculum that will meet your students' needs. Implementing this program could become the most exciting and rewarding teaching experience of your career and could have a greater impact on your students than any other project you have undertaken. With that in mind, I invite you to read and review the material and suggestions in *Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment* and then select the portions that will work for you and your students.

— Marge Christensen Gould

Introduction

In 1986 the country watched with excitement and anticipation as Christa McAuliffe attempted to take millions of students and educators with her on the ultimate field trip. Tragically, the life of this exceptional teacher ended with the explosion of the space shuttle *Challenger*. Nevertheless, her legacy lives on in her simple message: "I touch the future. I teach." Educators have always touched the future, but never before have we been presented with an opportunity to make as powerful an impact on the future as we are now if we incorporate an understanding of the changing workplace into how we teach.

The 21st Century Workplace

The challenge of preparing students for 21st century employment is immense. While our public schools still look and function much as they did in the 1960s, the workplace has undergone radical change. The corporation has been reinvented, downsized, streamlined, and reorganized. Technology has created an entirely new world of work, which requires employees with new skills and competencies. The flattening of the traditional management structure and the rapid pace of technological innovation and change have transformed the workplace into a rapidly evolving electronic setting in which people work together as teams to meet goals. Initiative and the work ethic of a lifelong learner have always been rewarded, but never before have these two characteristics become a minimum requirement for finding a job and keeping a career on track.

In April 1992, executives from corporate America and the United States Secretary of Labor responded to the changing workplace by compiling a list of skills and competencies that the 21st century worker would need to succeed. This list, commonly known as SCANS (named for its author, the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills), is the foundation for much of the program presented in *Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment* and is reprinted on pages xix–xx.

Although it might seem a relatively simple task for the public schools to incorporate the SCANS skills and competencies into the curriculum and prepare students for the workplace, nothing could be further from the truth, especially when the students are at risk of failing or dropping out of school. Teaching these students to perform successfully in the 21st century workplace is a complex task that requires reinventing the classroom, using computers as the central tools of instruction, connecting the classroom and the world of work, embracing a new educational philosophy, and implementing strategies used in effective programs elsewhere. While this may seem to be an overwhelming task, it is well worth the effort.

Employers have been extremely supportive of our program and have enthusiastically participated in our mentor program and other projects, such as mock job interviews for our seniors. The interest and active participation we have enjoyed locally seem to be part of a national trend as businesses across the country become more involved in preparing students who may someday become their employees.

The 21st Century Classroom

Although few would argue against the need for school reform, many continue to argue over how this reform should take place. Even if an agreement were reached today, national school reform would be such a massive undertaking that it would take years to have a noticeable impact on students entering the workforce. I believe effective national school reform will be accomplished classroom-by-classroom because of the diversity of the student population, the varying levels of technology available to the teacher, and the ability to effect innovative reform quickly in an individual classroom.

While the workplace has kept pace with rapidly changing technology, not all schools provide every student with daily access to up-to-date technology. This may be due to archaic or nonexistent technology, shrinking budgets, unfunded state and federal mandates, or a lack of resources to serve diverse student populations with divergent skills and needs. In addition, schools are faced with the challenge of educating students who are tired, hungry, abused, or homeless; who do not have supportive adults or positive role models at home; or who do not speak English as a first language. These students need special attention if they are to succeed in school and on the job. It is estimated that 35–40% of the students in grades K–12 in the United States today are at risk of failing or dropping out of school.

Although making significant changes on a national, district, or even school level requires much time and effort, the task is more manageable classroom-by-classroom. Even so, effective classroom reform involves fundamental change. You cannot expect to prepare your students for the dramatically different workplace of the 21st century by making a few minor changes to the traditional classroom. Reforming your classroom so that you can teach for 21st century employment will require that you incorporate as many of the components of this program as possible. Naturally, such reform has its costs: both the initial costs of transforming your classroom and curriculum and the ongoing costs of maintaining your program and its technology.

The returns on this financial investment, however, will be tremendous. Your program will help prevent at-risk students from becoming involved in the criminal justice system by helping them become productive citizens with the skills they need to pursue careers they choose. Your program creates a win-win situation for the students, the community, and the nation. And it is precisely this cost-benefit analysis that will help you convince your school, community members, and local employers and organizations to support your program with their time, donated materials, and money. This guide will show you how to build support for your reform effort and create a learning environment in which your students can break the cycle of failure and develop workplace skills that will help them reach their highest potential.

Computers are an important part of the 21st century classroom. There is little question that technology is reshaping education. Computers are one of the most effective tools ever created for teachers. But no matter how sophisticated computer technology becomes, it will not make a difference unless it is a tool in the hands of an excellent teacher. As the information superhighway continues to wind its way into classrooms throughout America, it is important to remember that it is just what its name implies: a highway to information. It is not, in itself, a road to success.

Teachers using technology in their 21st century classrooms will not be bystanders. They will become the driving forces of their classrooms, serving as managers of learning who inspire, motivate, and challenge their student-employees to improve and excel. Computer technology can provide you with more time to personalize the learning experience with the one-on-one interactions that are vitally important to today's youth. It is this combination of high-tech and high-touch that makes the real difference for students and improves their chances for success in school and in the working world.

Your 21st Century Guide

Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment is a comprehensive guide for educators who want to prepare their students to succeed in the workplace. This book is actually two books in one: a program coursebook and a guide for a 3-year English curriculum. In addition, an appendix section includes suggestions for presenting instructional material and restructuring the classroom for other core academic disciplines. Together, these elements provide you with the materials you need to create your own unique blueprint for a successful program.

Program coursebook. Part I provides detailed information on how to implement the program, reach today's learner, restructure the classroom, establish school and community partnerships, implement a mentoring program, and offer literacy classes for adults.

Curriculum guide. Part II includes suggestions and guidelines for structuring a six-semester high school English curriculum. Many of these suggestions may also be used in adult literacy and basic skills classes.

Appendix section. Appendix A includes suggestions for incorporating the 21st century employment program into math, science, social studies, and history classrooms. Other appendixes include a bibliography, information on software companies and the challenges of computers in the classroom, and further professional development opportunities.

Making It Your Own

As the leader of your 21st century classroom, you should regard this program as a template and select the portions that will work best for you and your students, adding other components as needed later on. This book has been designed as a personalized, user-friendly, and comprehensive guide to preparing at-risk students for the workplace.

The curriculum guide in Part II includes several additional features to help you quickly find material that is appropriate for your students. A "Semester at a Glance" section at the beginning of each semester provides an overview of the semester, and icons for computer use and adult literacy help you identify those sections of the curriculum outline that require the use of computers or are appropriate for an adult literacy class. In addition, each chapter ends with teacher note pages you can use to design your own 21st century classroom and curriculum.

On the Mark, Get New Mindset, Go!

Teaching today's high school students for 21st century employment is not just a good idea or another education catch phrase. The truth is, the very survival of our nation depends on it. Projections by the United States Department of Labor indicate that the American economy will create virtually no new jobs for those who lack basic skills. At the same time, the national dropout rate in most inner cities is 25%, and it is estimated that 35–40% of the students in grades K–12 are at risk of failing and not graduating from high school. Your decision to transform your classroom, curriculum, and role as a teacher will have a dramatic effect on your students. When you decide to make this program your own, you can shed your role as a traditional classroom teacher and adopt your new role as manager and facilitator of your 21st century workplace classroom. The enthusiasm and commitment with which you embrace your new role will be key factors in determining the success of your program.

Your new mindset as professional manager and facilitator of education will be your most powerful asset as you initiate and implement the reform process. It will help you think beyond the constraints of the classroom walls or the limitations of school budgets. It will help you network with business and community leaders and create a powerful synergy that will open possibilities for your program and your students that you may never have thought possible.

Although transforming your classroom into a 21st century learning environment may not be an easy journey, it will be a rewarding one for you and your students, the administrators, and business and community partners who will work with you to launch and implement your program.

I wish you much success and personal fulfillment as you take the first steps toward creating your own 21st century workplace classroom and preparing your students to succeed in the workplace of the future.

— Marge Christensen Gould

SCANS
Skills for the 21st Century Worker

The following skills and competencies were identified by the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) in *Learning a Living: A Blueprint for High Performance,* published by the United States Department of Labor in April 1992.

The Foundation

Competence in the world of work requires:

Basic skills—Reading, writing, arithmetic and mathematics, and speaking and listening.

Thinking skills—Thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, knowing how to learn, and reasoning.

Personal qualities—Individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity.

Competencies

Effective workers can productively use:

Resources—Allocating time, money, materials, space, and staff.

Interpersonal skills—Working on teams, teaching others, serving customers, leading, negotiating, and working well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Information—Acquiring and evaluating data, organizing and maintaining files, interpreting and communicating, and using computers to process information.

Systems—Understanding social, organizational, and technological systems, monitoring and correcting performance, and designing or improving systems.

Technology—Selecting equipment and tools, applying technology to specific tasks, and maintaining and troubleshooting technologies.

SCANS and *Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment*

The SCANS skills that are indicated by the check marks are developed in *Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment.*

- ✓ Acquires and evaluates information
- ✓ Allocates human resources
- Allocates material and facility resources
- ✓ Allocates time to improve performance
- ✓ Applies technology to task
- Approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques
- ✓ Approaches thoughts and solutions in new ways
- Budgets money
- ✓ Communicates information in writing
- ✓ Demonstrates responsibility
- ✓ Develops a decision-making plan
- ✓ Develops a self-management plan
- ✓ Exercises leadership
- ✓ Exhibits ethics in decision making
- ✓ Improves and designs systems
- ✓ Initiates problem-solving techniques
- ✓ Interprets and communicates information
- ✓ Knows how to learn
- ✓ Listens and responds to verbal and nonverbal communications
- ✓ Locates, understands, and interprets written information
- ✓ Maintains and troubleshoots technology
- ✓ Maintains a positive view of self
- ✓ Matches technology to task
- ✓ Monitors and corrects performance
- ✓ Negotiates to arrive at a decision
- ✓ Organizes and maintains information
- ✓ Organizes oral communications
- ✓ Participates as a member of a team
- Performs basic computations
- ✓ Relates in familiar and unfamiliar social situations
- Sees things in the mind's eye
- Serves clients and customers
- ✓ Teaches others
- Understands social, organizational, and technological systems
- ✓ Understands systems
- ✓ Uses computers to process information
- ✓ Uses reasoning
- ✓ Works with cultural diversity

Part I

Program Coursebook

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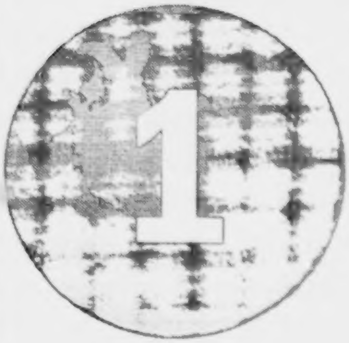

Chapter 1

The 21st Century Teacher

Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment is a program designed to help students achieve their highest potential and develop the skills and competencies they will need to succeed in school and in the 21st century workplace. No program, however, can replace the energy, high standards, and commitment to learning that an effective teacher can bring to a classroom. As the teacher, you are the key to making the 21st century classroom work. Your commitment and excellence will provide the synergy that will make the new classroom come alive and become a vital part of your students' lives. This book will help you adopt your new role as manager and facilitator and will help you make your 21st century classroom a reality.

Taking Charge

Your leadership is crucial in implementing this program, however you choose to adapt it to meet your needs. As the teacher, you may be

- initiating the classroom restructuring effort.
- the driving force in implementing this program.
- collaborating with other teachers to create an interdisciplinary focus for the curriculum.

- seeking funds to implement the program and, if needed, writing grants for outside funding.
- the liaison between the business community and your students.
- the public relations director for the program.
- coordinating the mentoring program.
- implementing literacy classes for adults.

To derive the greatest benefits from this program, you need to take charge of the change process and implement those elements, strategies, or lessons that you feel are feasible, adding more elements of the program as you are able to do so.

This chapter includes two sections. The first discusses typical activities of the 21st century teacher, including efforts to understand computers, interact in cyberspace, build public relations, make business-community connections, and seek funds. The second section details two sample timelines for implementing the program at your site: a limited and gradual approach and a comprehensive and timely approach.

Professional Development

Understanding Technology

As future 21st century employees, today's students must learn how to use the appropriate forms of technology to find, process, and apply information to workplace problems or situations. Not surprisingly, at least 10 of the SCANS skills for the 21st century worker make some reference to the use of technology (see page xx).

In the hands of enthusiastic, informed teachers, technology has a tremendous potential to transform the educational process. There is little question that computer literacy is a necessary skill for educators today and will be even more essential for educators as the 21st century progresses. Technology skills can be gained or enhanced through professional development activities and through exploration of the two primary components of computers: hardware and software.

Professional development. In an ideal world, all schools would provide professional development in appropriate technology for their staff. Unfortunately, many schools have minimal or no professional development activities due to financial or other constraints. Nevertheless, if we are to expect our students to become lifelong learners, we should expect no less from ourselves.

A small investment in keeping up to date on the newest computer technology resources for teachers will pay you large dividends in the years ahead. The investment can be as modest as finding an hour a week to look through magazines that cover the educational use of computer technology. There are many excellent educational computer magazines and journals, such as ASCD's *Curriculum/Technology Quarterly* (800-933-ASCD; www.ascd.org/framectq.html) and the *T.H.E. Journal* (FAX: 714-730-3739; www.thejournal.com). If these are not available at your school, they may be available at your local library, community college, or nearby college or university. You might also consider pooling potential readers and persuading the school or the district to fund a subscription that will be shared by teachers.

A small investment in keeping up to date on the newest computer technology resources for teachers will pay you large dividends in the years ahead.

If you prefer to learn on your own, consider investing in an inexpensive how-to computer guide for new programs or those with which you are not familiar and working through the chapters at your own pace. Make sure you know the basics, such as loading new software, backing up your files, and performing word-processing tasks in addition to keeping up-to-date with more advanced tasks.

Hardware. Hardware is, generally speaking, a piece of equipment that enables you to do certain tasks. Often, the first hurdle to understanding computers is becoming comfortable with the computer as a piece of equipment. If you are not comfortable using computers as the central tools of instruction in your classroom, consider enrolling in computer courses offered by your district or a nearby community college.

Software. Software refers to the programs available for use on a computer. An ever-increasing number of software programs are available to the teacher. Several of them are

Appendix E includes a listing of the software programs included in the curriculum outline in Part II and Appendix A.

recommended in this resource if you choose to implement the curriculum outlined in Part II and Appendix A. Depending on the resources available to you, you may decide to purchase other programs or use programs available at your site.

Although you will not immediately need all of the software listed in the curriculum, you will need the following types of software to get started:

- A keyboarding program
- A beginning reading program appropriate for teens and adults
- Two or three reading comprehension programs
- A word-processing program that is used in business settings

If you are serious about implementing this program, you should not be discouraged if you are uncomfortable with computers or feel your computer skills are inadequate. Your commitment and leadership skills will help you find a way to acquire the computer skills you need before you reform your classroom.

Interacting in Cyberspace

The effect of technology on the workplace has already extended far beyond simply using technology to accomplish given tasks. Computer technology has changed the way people communicate in the workplace. E-mail and computer networks within companies enable employees to communicate electronically with customers and co-workers throughout the world, making it easier for employees to be part of a team that might include people of different ages, locations, and ethnic backgrounds. Your 21st century classroom will help your students develop their teamwork and communication skills.

Because communication with co-workers and customers may take place online, you need to be familiar with the Internet so you can help your students achieve the same computer literacy and comfort. The benefits and resources available to teachers who can use the Internet seem endless. The Internet has also created a vast network of educators in all subject areas and grade levels, who work with all types of students, who live in all corners of the world, and who can now communicate with one another as often as they like through e-mail with a few simple keystrokes. Organizations such as the National Education Association (NEA) and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) have areas on the Internet (www.nea.org and www.ascd.org) where they offer a multitude of resources for educators as well as opportunities to talk with other educators.

If you are not yet familiar with the Internet, consider signing up for an introductory course at your local community college. A list of common Internet terms and their definitions is provided on page 236.

Building Public Relations

Public Relations

You will also benefit from developing strong public relations skills when you implement this program. The voting public in many communities is not enthusiastically supportive of increasing funding for public education. To seek funds through the school district, you will need to build public awareness of the reforms and programs in your classroom that are improving your students' academic performance and success. Increased public appreciation of these successes will lead to increased support from the public, the business community, and other organizations, such as the community college and the city council.

It is equally important to maintain good public relations with district administrators and members of the school board. Be sure you know who your district administrators and school board members are, and keep them informed of the successes of your students and of your program.

In addition, your public relations skills will be an integral part of your working relationship with the business community as you make connections between the classroom and the world of work and establish community partnerships with your program.

Program Potential

When students see the connection between the classroom and the workplace, they often take their schoolwork much more seriously.

Making Business-Community Connections

The integration of local businesses and the community into the learning environment has provided educators with one of the greatest learning tools since the introduction of technology in the classroom. When you make connections between the school and businesses and the community, you build an important bridge from the classroom to the real world of work, giving powerful meaning and relevance to the work your students do in the classroom.

When students see the connection between the classroom and the workplace, they often take their schoolwork much more seriously and realize that what they are doing is important, meaningful, and high-tech—not just remedial busy work.

Business and community partnerships will also provide you with a rich variety of resources that will make it easier and more exciting to run your program. Be prepared to be pleasantly surprised with the speed and ease with which businesses and the community can respond to your needs. While it can often take a maze of red tape and a long time to get anything new done in a school district, things can be accomplished in a matter of hours or days when you work with the corporate world. The most important benefit, though, of your business and community connections is the circle of positive, enthusiastic people in the community who want to help your students succeed.

Seeking Funding

Most teachers have become accustomed to living with the "do more with less" philosophy so prevalent in this age of shrinking school budgets. It is imperative, however, that this way of thinking does not prevent you from asking for what you need to effectively prepare your students for the 21st century workplace.

If you think your school cannot afford this program, think again. This time, think beyond the school or school district.

If you think your school cannot afford this program, think again. This time, think beyond the school or school district. In most cases, funding for this kind of school-to-work program is available from a number of sources in addition to the school. Fortunately, these alternative sources continue to increase as government and the private sector realize that high school graduates are not prepared to enter the workforce and begin to set aside funds for programs that emphasize the school-to-work connection.

Across America, the goal of preparing students for work is being met through collaborative efforts between schools and corporations, government agencies, institutions of higher learning, and the justice system. You will also want to look for other funding agencies. Before you approach any of these entities, however, you might want to study a copy of *Reclaiming At-Risk Youth for the 21st Century Workplace*, a case study published as a supplement to the *ASCD Curriculum Handbook* (December 1996). The case study covers a program that was made possible by funding from school/community partnerships and grants from private organizations.

Bringing Your Teachers on Board

If you are an administrator interested in implementing this program in your school or district, your most challenging task may be to secure the support of the teachers who will implement the program in their classrooms. Although the reasons for resistance may vary from site to site, many of them may stem from the impression that reform is being mandated without input from those who will implement it. You will find, for example, that many of your teachers may agree with the self-paced, student-centered, success-oriented philosophy of this program. Disagreements will multiply, however, when they consider how the philosophy may be applied in their classrooms.

One key to bringing your teachers on board is to involve them in the reform process from the beginning. You could do this by forming a 21st Century Committee of key teachers and giving this committee the responsibility of

On the Web

Many educational organizations have sites on the Web. Here are just a few:

- *National Education Association (www.nea.org)*
- *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (www.ascd.org)*

Other resources for educators have been compiled into lists of Web sites. These include

- *Education World™ (www.educationworld.com)*
- *Educators Network (www.educatorsnet.com)*

- becoming familiar with the program and curriculum outline in this book;
- identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum, particularly as it meets (or fails to meet) the need to prepare students for the workplace; and
- deciding how to modify the 21st century program and curriculum outline to help students prepare for their careers.

You may also want to provide the committee with a suggested timeline of implementation and, even more important, a clear statement on the kind of financial and material resources you are willing to commit to the reform effort.

Bringing Your Administrators on Board

If you are a teacher interested in implementing the program in your school or district, your most challenging task may be to secure the support of your administrators and school board members. Because each district is different, you will need to determine how receptive these people are to classroom reform and how committed the district is to redesigning a curriculum to prepare students for the workplace. The following suggestions will help you prepare a proposal that seeks formal approval of this program by your school's or district's administration:

- Determine and then follow the proper procedures in your district for implementing this kind of classroom reform. Try to get a sense of the district politics that could affect your effort to receive school board approval.
- Before writing the proposal, discuss how you would modify the program for your classroom with an administrator you respect. Then write the proposal and ask the administrator to review it and give you suggestions on the best way to present the proposal to the people who will approve it.
- Before presenting the proposal, explore the possibility of a partnership with an organization such as the juvenile court, the state department that oversees the JTPA (Job

Training Partnership Act), or a major employer, and write the proposal to include how that partnership will benefit your students and help you implement your program.

- When you present your proposal to your school or district, ask a representative of the partnership organization to present the proposal with you.
- Research which private grants are available for projects such as yours, and apply for some or all of them. Be sure to note in your proposal to the district if you receive grant funding. (NOTE: Check your district policies on grants. You may have to obtain district approval prior to accepting the grant.)
- Use this book to substantiate your proposal. This program is based on sound educational research and has been used in the classroom with a high degree of success. The program
    - is student-centered and success-oriented.
    - uses technology in the classroom as the central tool of instruction, not as an add-on or peripheral.
    - involves strategies to build self-esteem and develop personal and social responsibility.
    - includes activities that help develop SCANS skills.
    - uses word-processing software programs during the writing process.
    - uses software that is interdisciplinary and involves activities that develop critical thinking skills.
    - focuses on writing skills.
    - incorporates cooperative learning activities.
    - helps students see the relevance of work done in the classroom to the workplace.
    - pairs at-risk youth with professional adult role models from area employers.
    - includes school and community partnerships.

You may also wish to refer to some of the relevant information, student comments, or statistics in this book when you prepare your proposal.

Taking Charge

Your first step in getting started with this program is determining how much of it you can implement at your site and establishing a timeline for doing so.

Getting Started

Your first step in getting started with this program is determining how much of it you can implement at your site and establishing a timeline for doing so. This section provides suggestions for implementing the program on a limited and gradual basis or on a comprehensive and timely basis. These are only suggestions, not ironclad plans for implementing your program. Each site will be different based on its demographics, district dynamics and philosophy, finances, community involvement in education, and many other factors. Consider the situation at your particular site, and then make plans to implement your program based on that situation.

Limited and gradual. If you are in a district or school where you might raise eyebrows if you take the chairs out of straight rows and place them into a circle, you may prefer taking a year to try some of the strategies, methodologies, or portions of the curriculum before tackling the more extensive (and visible) classroom reform described in this program. Then you can expand your program as you are able to do so.

Planning

- Read the book and select those elements of the program and segments of the curriculum that you would like to work into your own program.
- Create a new learning environment to the extent that you are able to do so, even if it only involves rearranging the furniture, hanging artwork on the walls, and putting some plants in the room. Try to simulate a professional workplace setting, such as an office, a publishing company, a software production company, or a research company.

- Try to obtain at least four computers for your classroom.

First Semester

- Assume the role of manager/facilitator and explain to students their new role as professional workers.
- Adopt the educational philosophy and begin using some of the motivational strategies and the new form of assessment outlined in chapter 2.
- Keep records to document student progress in such areas as academic performance, reading skills, writing skills, attendance, and attitude.

Second Semester

- Establish a partnership with a business or an organization in order to connect students with the world of work.
- Initiate a mentoring program as described in chapter 5. A mentoring program will cost you virtually nothing and will provide you with valuable contacts and networking opportunities with local businesses and the community.

Summer Planning Before Year Two

- Arrange to transform your classroom into a professional workplace setting. Your mentors may be able to help with such things as painting and obtaining office furniture and computers.
- If you are ready to expand your program, reread the section focused on "Bringing Your Administrators on Board" if it applies to your situation and begin using the strategies relevant to your site.

Comprehensive and timely. If you are in a district or school that is ready to act on its commitment to school reform, you may be able to implement the complete program.

Planning

- Read this book and customize the program for your particular site. (The note pages at the end of each chapter may help you do this.)
- Write a proposal to the appropriate administrator detailing what the program entails and how you plan to implement it. (You can use this book as a foundation for the proposal.)
- Determine what your district or site is prepared to fund, and investigate additional funding sources for your program. These may include writing grant requests to the state or federal government or to private foundations and/or establishing a school/community partnership with the courts, the community college, corporations, businesses, utility companies, the Department of Economic Security, or civic organizations.
- Create your 21st century classroom based on the suggestions in chapter 3. You can turn this into an excellent class project which will promote team building among your students and increase your students' sense of ownership in the program.
- Arrange to obtain computers and software for your program. Possible sources of equipment are discussed at the end of chapter 3.
- Complete the student selection and scheduling process.
- If necessary, use the strategies for enlisting support outlined in the "Bringing Your Teachers on Board" or "Bringing Your Administrators On Board" sections above.

First Semester

- Assume the role of manager/facilitator in the classroom.
- Adopt the educational philosophy and begin using the methodologies, strategies, and curriculum outlined in this book.

- Keep records to document student progress in such areas as academic performance, reading skills, writing skills, attendance, and attitude.

Second Semester

- Establish a partnership with a business or an organization in order to connect students with the world of work.
- Initiate a mentoring program as described in chapter 5. A mentoring program will cost you virtually nothing and will provide you with valuable contacts and networking opportunities with local businesses and the community.
- Arrange to meet with people at the community college, your school, the Department of Economic Security, or the adult basic education agency to plan evening courses for parents. You need not implement these courses until the following school year, but laying the groundwork for it now will help build support and increase resources for the classes.

Chapter 1

Notes on Becoming a 21st Century Teacher

Understanding Technology

Interacting in Cyberspace

Building Public Relations

Making Business-Community Connections

Seeking Funding

Possible Sources of Grants or Funding:

Organization	Contact Person	Telephone Number

Bringing Your Teachers on Board

Teacher	Telephone Number

Bringing Your Administrators on Board

Administrator	Telephone Number

Getting Started

How Can I Customize the Program for My Site?

Things to Do

Other Ideas

Chapter 2

Reaching Today's Learner

Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment is a student-centered, success-oriented program based on the belief that all students, including those at risk, can and will succeed if they are given a self-paced program in a professional workplace setting that preserves their dignity and facilitates student and teacher interaction.

The 21st century classroom program makes it possible for you to offer an informal and individual educational plan to every one of your students. Doing so, however, involves a great deal of work, thought, and caring. As the office manager of your 21st century classroom, you will need to adapt to a new learning environment in which 20 or more students may be working on as many different lessons.

This chapter provides an overview of effective strategies for reaching today's learner and creating a learning environment that you will want to consider and incorporate into your program. Although the adjustments you and your students will make may be difficult at times, the rewards for implementing this program can be tremendous.

Your students will

- improve their academic performance and enjoy success;

- feel more positive about themselves; and
- see that their learning environment is directly relevant to their lives and their future working careers.

You will

- enjoy a higher level of respect from your students; and
- be able to focus on teaching because you will spend very little time handling discipline problems.

Who Would Benefit?

Selecting Students for the Program

Student selection depends on the needs of your student population. The curriculum for this program begins with beginning reading programs and reading comprehension programs designed for adolescents and adults reading at or below the fifth-grade level. These programs are also effective with students who read well in their own language but do not read well in English.

Multiage groupings. If possible, consider grouping students from grades 9 through 12 together. Doing so will erase the perceived stigma of being placed in a literacy program and will help create a climate of cooperation among the students. It also is a more realistic reflection of the workplace, where people of all ages work together. You will find that students will begin to look to one another for assistance with the computers and software and that the younger students tend to look up to the seniors. By emphasizing the importance of graduating from high school, and by providing special projects and assignments as well as types of recognition for seniors, you will encourage the younger students to emulate the seniors and to make high school graduation one of their goals.

Grouping students from different grades is a more realistic reflection of the workplace, where people of all ages work together.

Screening. You may wish to administer a standardized reading test to test your students' reading comprehension and phonetic analysis skill levels. One such test is the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT). Another is STAR Reading, published by Renaissance Learning, which publishes Accelerated Reader (http://www.renlearn.com/starreading/default.htm). This test of reading comprehension takes about 10 minutes. These tests are geared for high school students.

One test appropriate for adults is the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Your site will probably have specific standardized tests that you are required to use. For more information, consult your administrator or the person in charge of testing.

When selecting students for the program, consider accepting students based on criteria other than reading test scores, including

- students who are trying to pass their classes but are unable to read their textbooks, seem ashamed to read aloud in class, or are simply not succeeding in class in spite of their determined efforts.
- dropouts who are returning to school or students who have poor writing skills and may drop out.
- students who have low self-esteem, have poor attendance records, are unmotivated, or have low reading and writing skills.
- students who have been placed on probation by the court.
- ESL students who are having a difficult time succeeding in school.

Optimal class size. The maximum class size for your 21st century classroom will be determined by you and your school or school district. The recommended class size of 20 students allows for individual attention and makes it easier for you to implement the methodologies and educational philosophy of this program. Class sizes much greater than 20 students may jeopardize the integrity and success of your program.

Success Breeds Success

During my many years working with at-risk teens and adults, the one truth I have seen proven time and time again is that success breeds success. There is no better remedy for a history of failure than a healthy dose of success. That may be true, you might be thinking, but how do you help students

Winning Strategies

succeed, especially when they have no interest in attending school in the first place?

One of the main shortcomings of traditional classrooms is that they often set students up for failure by having them assume the role of passive learners who must soak up knowledge from a textbook. When students can barely write a sentence or cannot read English well because it is their second language, they might not understand the textbook or be able to take appropriate notes during a lecture. This traditional classroom setup reveals students' poor reading and writing skills to the teacher and their fellow students. Because this can be very embarrassing for students, is it any wonder, then, that they have little or no interest in coming to school?

There are many proven strategies for setting your students up to succeed. The 21st century classroom allows students to begin with material or software at their skill level and then work at their own pace to more advanced material. When the students can learn at their level, they will not become frustrated as easily, and they will feel that they are making progress, *that they are succeeding*. In this program, students can actually see their progress as it is recorded on progress sheets or on graphs and charts. They can compare the essay they wrote during the first year of the program with writing samples from the final semesters of the program. They can see the change in their pretest and posttest reading scores. And they will feel a great deal of achievement when they learn how to use computers and word-processing programs and different technology to complete their work.

Program Potential

When the students can learn at their level, they will not become frustrated as easily, and they will feel that they are making progress, that they are succeeding.

You may already have incorporated many of the following teaching strategies into your own classroom. The strategies outlined below are especially effective in the 21st century classroom because they help you model the behavior of successful managers in the workplace and motivate your students to embrace their new roles and learning environment with enthusiasm and responsibility.

Computers motivate. Placing students in an office setting and treating them as professional office workers does wonders for their self-esteem and performance. One of my students wrote, "The computers make you want to do more work. They make you feel like a businessperson." Most of my students share this belief that computers motivate them to work. Part of this motivation arises from the student's ability to interact with educational software on the computer and use word-processing software to present their work in a professional way. Simply having high-tech equipment in the room provides a visual reminder that this is a professional office where the students are professional workers.

One minute for one student. One of the key strategies that can be used in the 21st century classroom is discussed in *The One-Minute Manager* by Kenneth Blanchard, Ph.D., and Spencer Johnson, M.D. (Berkley Books, 1983). This national bestseller offers a highly successful method for managing people. One of the basic principles of *The One-Minute Manager* is that effective managers (teachers) should devote one minute of each day to meet face-to-face with the people they manage and to remember that these people are their most important resources. I highly recommend that you follow this practice with your students. Find something positive to say about each student's performance or writing, attendance, punctuality, professional appearance, or about the fact that he or she is taking responsibility for his or her own progress. Try to catch that student doing something right and then be sure to compliment him or her on it.

Probably the most relevant insight from *The One-Minute Manager* for the 21st century classroom is that "everyone is a potential winner. Some people are disguised as losers. Don't let their appearances fool you." At-risk students are often disguised as "losers." They have developed a tough, indifferent exterior to conceal their frustration and insecurities. When you catch them doing something right and you spend a minute complimenting them, you send a clear message to the student that is as clearly understood by the student's peers: "You are not a loser. I don't see you as a loser. I see you as a winner." Soon the student may begin to think that he or she isn't a loser and should be more self-confident. And increased self-confidence may help the student develop the motivation he or she needs to work hard and succeed.

Always be caring. In the workplace, managers realize that the productivity of their employees increases when the employees feel valued. Managers may show their appreciation for their employees by presenting them with awards for such things as achieving a high sales volume or providing excellent customer service. As a manager of your 21st century classroom, you can do similar things to make your students feel valued.

The ABCs of the 21st century classroom are simple: Always Be Caring. One of the major reasons that at-risk students do not like school is that they feel that no one cares. Saying you care is not enough—your actions must back up your words. Part of your new role as the office manager is to show your support for your employees, the students.

This support may take a variety of forms. You might present students with Office Worker of the Week Awards (see page 27), hold an open house so that visitors can see the important roles your students play in the professional workplace classroom (see pages 57–58), have their writing published, or honor them with a "Celebrate Literacy" evening (see pages 59–63).

Managers in the workplace also understand that an employee who is mentally, psychologically, and physically healthy will be a better employee than one who is distracted by problems or ill health. As a result, many managers actively promote employee wellness by providing such benefits as health insurance, discount memberships in workout gyms, counseling services, and company picnics for employees and their families.

As the manager of your 21st century classroom, you can promote your students' wellness by pairing them with positive adult role models as mentors (see chapter 5). You may also need to create and maintain a list of persons in the community and local organizations who can help your students. Some teachers have supported their students by

- helping them find jobs.
- checking immigration regulations and helping resolve immigration problems.
- arranging for eye exams and helping them obtain eyeglasses at little or no charge.

- helping with scholarship applications for the students or their parents.
- helping their parents attend evening classes to improve their skills or prepare to change careers.
- contacting Legal Aid.
- referring their relatives to adult basic education or GED preparation classes in the community.
- referring them, their parents, or their relatives to social service agencies for assistance (food stamps, food baskets, etc.).

Although these activities are probably not in your current job description, the teacher's role and responsibilities are changing. When you assume your new role as manager and facilitator in the 21st century classroom, you also assume the responsibility for doing whatever you can to make it possible for your students to learn.

Set high expectations. Research indicates that students do better when teachers set high expectations for them. Although you need to be caring, you also need to push your students and make them realize that you have high expectations for them and are not going to let them get away with work that is below their potential. As the material in this program becomes progressively more difficult, you will want to remind your students often that you are confident they can do the work and be successful.

Although you need to be caring, you also need to push your students and make them realize that you have high expectations for them.

You may want to tell your students that you are going to insist on good quality work even if it means several revisions on their part because you want them to succeed in the real world of employment. When they have writing assignments, insist that they write at least one full page and that they proofread and correct the papers before turning them in. After you make corrections on their papers, have them make the corrections and turn in a clean copy. Constantly stress to your students the fact that employers would accept nothing less and that you want to prepare them to be successful in the world of work.

This may be the first time in the students' lives that someone has expressed such confidence in their futures. Remember that for all of us, much of what we can do is influenced by what we *think* we can do. For at-risk students, *perception is everything.* All students need to believe that they can do what is required of them in order to be successful. The professional office setting lends itself to setting high expectations and providing support students need as they work toward meeting your expectations. The office setting also allows for an increased amount of student/teacher interaction so the teacher can make sure each student is able to complete the work to the very best of his or her ability.

Program Potential

The bottom line is to help each student rise to his or her highest potential.

Use performance-based student assessment. The grading policy to assess your students' achievement in this program should take into consideration student differences and should reflect the growth of each individual. This will motivate your students to take responsibility for their own progress and to strive to achieve their highest potentials.

Ideally, student grades in this program will be performance-based and will initially consider factors that would be included in a performance evaluation on a job: attitude, attendance, and progress. Once students begin writing essays, the grades from their weekly writing assignments will also be part of your assessment. Explain how you will assess and grade their performance at the start of the year and discuss how their attitudes will be part of your assessment, just as they will be in the workplace. Emphasize that attendance is as important for this class as it is on the job, and so it will also be considered when you determine each student's grade. Explain to your students that this kind of grading allows even the student with the lowest reading and writing skills the opportunity to earn an A.

Your students should understand that you expect them to become self-directed learners who take responsibility for their own progress. When they complete one level of a software program, they should go on to the next level or select another software program. When they have completed the weekly writing assignment, they should work on a software program, assignment, or project listed in their folders. In my experience with this program, the As or Bs my students earned were usually the first As or Bs on their report cards in a long time. Yet once they earned that good grade, their report cards for the next term were invariably much better.

Recognize student successes. Recognizing student successes, even the smallest ones, is an important part of the 21st century classroom. Students love to see their names in print, to see their writing published, to see their photos hanging on the wall in the office classroom, or to see themselves on videotape or slides in a presentation on the program.

Present Office Worker of the Week Awards. One way to recognize student successes and promote the importance of a good attitude and professional behavior is to present one student each week with an Office Worker of the Week Award. This award should be presented to a student (or students) who has distinguished himself or herself in some way that week. The award could be for perfect attendance, great improvement, an outstanding project or essay, or helping others. Give the student a certificate and place his or her name on a large posterboard mounted on the wall or in some other prominent place in the room.

Make the presentation of the award a special event. Call the student in front of the class and ask the class to applaud as you make the presentation and shake his or her hand. Ask the students to keep the Office Worker of the Week certificates in their employability skills portfolios (see Part II, fifth semester, page 211). Explain to them that this award is similar to an Employee of the Week Award that might be presented in the workplace. Discuss the importance of always doing their best, and comment on the fact that those who have good attitudes and do excellent work are generally those who receive the promotions and pay increases and become valued employees.

A sample Office Worker of the Week certificate is provided at the end of this chapter on page 37.

Earn motivational mileage. I have often selected students who have made excellent progress and who are comfortable with public speaking to address statewide literacy conferences or visiting graduate education classes from the university. For transportation, I arranged for the students to ride to

Celina's Certificate

Celina entered my program late in her freshman year. She was a very shy, nervous girl who had little self-confidence. She worked very hard and one week was honored as the Office Worker of the Week with a presentation and a certificate. The next day she came to class excited to tell me that she and her mother had hung copies of the certificate in every room of their apartment!

From that day on, Celina was a new person. No longer quiet, Celina became enthusiastic about school and frequently volunteered to assist other students. She even made the honor roll several times and was the first in her family to earn a high school diploma. She was also awarded a scholarship to the local community college in recognition of her outstanding growth and progress.

Never underestimate the power of positive recognition.

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the event in a white stretch limousine. You will find that most businesspersons in the community recognize the importance of literacy. As a result, many of them might be willing to discount their prices if you request transportation for students to this kind of event.

Publish students' writing. Wherever possible, try to arrange to have your students' writing published. The curriculum portion of this book covers such projects as class newsletters that are written entirely by students. In addition, you might also submit student articles and stories for publication in newsletters for literacy programs.

The most exciting publishing experience my students have had occurred when the educational software publisher Teacher Support Software in Gainesville, Florida, held a contest for students to write stories about real-life issues for their upgrade of their *Reading Realities* software series, a reading comprehension program for at-risk high school students. Three of our students were awarded checks and contracts, and their stories were published on a supplementary diskette with the *Reading Realities* program.

You might consider having your students submit their writing to *Teen Ink*, a 36-page magazine written entirely by teenagers for teenagers. First published in 1989 by the Young Authors Foundation, *Teen Ink* reaches more than 340,000 students in 3,500 middle and high schools in the United States. Previous issues have contained nonfiction, articles about teen issues, poetry, fiction, reviews (of books, movies, music, and colleges), college essays, articles about technology, feedback, and letters to the editor. Art and photography are also published in the magazine. Submissions can be sent to *Teen Ink*, Box 30, Newton, MA 02161. Further information is also available by phone at (617) 964-6800, e-mail at editor@teenink.com, and the Web at www.teenink.com.

Display student achievements. Consider taking photos of your students throughout the year and designating a wall in the room to be the Wall of Fame. Students love to see themselves in photos. This wall will also provide new students with photos that illustrate many of the exciting things that have occurred as part of your program. You can include photos of open houses, awards ceremonies, and students participating in a variety of activities such as flying aircraft as a part of the Wright Flight program (see next page), helping parents in the evening classes, engaging in mock job interviews, and giving tours of the room to visitors. The photos provide a visual record of your program, and they give the room a personalized touch, further contributing to your students' feeling that this is "their place."

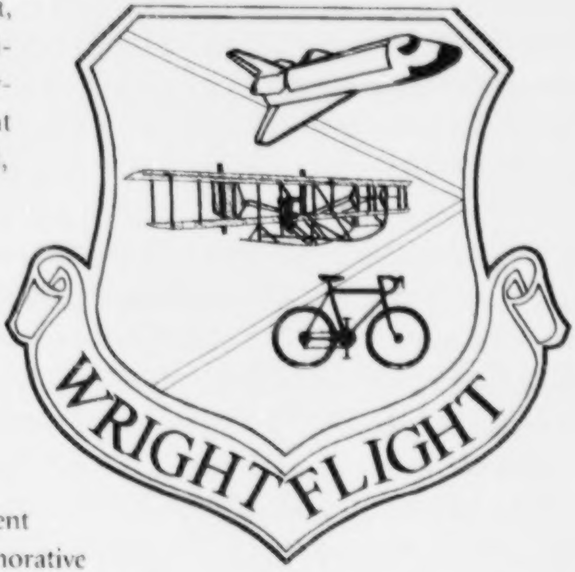
Developing Responsibility

The role of the student in the professional office setting is that of an office worker. In the first year, students are graded on how well they take responsibility for their own progress, as well as on grades for their weekly essays, attendance, attitude, and other criteria established by the teacher. Not only is personal responsibility required, but social responsibility is emphasized as well. Within the office setting, students are constantly told that they are now professional office workers and that they must behave with respect toward one another and toward the equipment and their workplace in general. The following strategies will help you create an office classroom environment that facilitates student efforts to develop responsibility.

Building commitment. Students entering the program are required to sign a behavior contract, which their parents or guardians also sign. (A copy of a sample contract is included on page 38.) Requiring students and parents to sign such contracts places some important responsibilities on the student and provides you with some leverage should that student need to change his or her behavior. Once the contract is signed, the student is responsible for coming to class and resuming work or beginning a new task just as he or she would be responsible for coming to work and working. When composing the wording for the student contracts, it is wise to add provisions that prohibit any violations of your school's regulations for student Internet use.

Making It Work

Wright Flight Helps Students Reach New Heights



Named for Orville and Wilbur Wright, Wright Flight is a nonprofit organization that awards students free flying lessons if they take the Wright Flight course, set and achieve an academic goal, and pass a test on the history of flight. Wright Flight is available to all kids, but its purpose is to show at-risk youth that in order to change their altitude, they must first change their attitude.

Fly days are held several times a year, and students fly with an instructor in a Cessna 172 or similar plane. Upon the successful completion of the flight, each student is presented with a certificate and commemorative T-shirt. Many also receive a photo of themselves with the pilot and the aircraft. The organization includes civilian and Air Force or Air National Guard pilots who volunteer their time and occasionally their aircraft.

My students have had some awesome experiences with the Wright Flight program. One student who was confined to a wheelchair earned six flying lessons and was selected to fly to a nearby Indian reservation, where he spoke to students after landing the aircraft with his instructor. This student was selected as the Wright Flight Student of the Year.

To find out if there is a Wright Flight chapter in your state, or for information on organizing a Wright Flight chapter, contact Major Robin Stoddard, Wright Flight, 7075 S. Plumer Ave. #1, Tucson, AZ 85706-6990, (520) 294-0404, www.wrightflight.org.

Cooperative learning. This program is designed to teach students to become independent, responsible, self-directed learners. However, students also become team players and develop interpersonal skills through many cooperative learning activities and projects.

Cooperative learning develops self-esteem, lowers a student's feelings of anxiety, and helps a student develop interpersonal skills. It also requires students to teach one another. The best way to learn something is, of course, to teach it to someone else. The ability to teach others is one of the key skills listed in the SCANS report (see pages xix–xx for a complete list of skills and competencies). Cooperative learning is also an excellent system for teaching students to get along with others who may be different from them.

Learning actively. At-risk students tend to learn better in situations in which they play an active rather than a passive role. Thus, placing them into an actual office setting and simulating workplace-type situations or setting up other types of simulations relating to various projects (e.g., creating the School of the Future) is a much more effective method of teaching them than placing them in straight rows of chairs with a teacher in front of them lecturing. Being physically, actively involved in learning makes the experience real for them.

In this office setting, students are able to get up and move around the office a little. For example, they may need to get their disks, return their folders to the plastic holders, or turn in their papers. Every once in a while, they will have the opportunity to move around to clean the computer monitors and desks.

Students may also give visitors tours of the room. If you work to develop public awareness of your program (see chapter 4), people will want to visit your classroom. Students love to give tours to these visitors and explain how the program differs from a regular classroom. This gives them an opportunity to be physically involved in the event as well as to develop their public speaking skills.

"This classroom looks more like an office than a school classroom. It is very nice to work in a place like this one because here they treat you like an adult and not like a child . . . . You learn how to behave in a real work situation, like being on time every day. . . . Students get so involved in this program that they like to work together and help teach others. I have learned from others, and I have taught others."

—Francisco

Most at-risk students need physical involvement in the learning process.

"A really good thing about this class is that all the students get along in here and are all helpful to one another. It usually is not like that in most regular classes; if you need help you have to ask the teacher. But in this class, if a student needs help, someone is always there to take the time to help, even if it is another student."

—Carmen

The mentoring experience discussed in chapter 5 will also give students opportunities to be actively involved in the learning process, because they will be exploring various careers and may even spend time shadowing someone on the job in a career of their choice.

Enjoying the learning experience. Because many students are motivated by a sense of fun (see Jerry Conrath, *Our Other Youth*, 1994), several of the software programs that are incorporated into this curriculum involve games. All of the programs in the Carmen Sandiego series as well as the Sim City programs use games, are fun to use, and are highly educational. You will find that most students also enjoy assuming the role of a professional office worker and using computers to do the type of work required in the real world.

Staying motivated and accountable. Teacher and staff comments and expectations correlate highly with student achievement. This has particularly important implications for at-risk students because they tend to have poor attendance and often do not appreciate the importance of education. Thus, it is crucial that teachers repeatedly discuss the relevance of what students are learning to their future roles in the workplace.

At-risk students tend to attribute failure or success to factors beyond their control, such as luck or chance, because they have what is referred to as an "external locus of control." In contrast, students with an "internal locus of control" realize that if they study and work hard, they will probably do well, and if they do not do any work, they will fail. Because most at-risk students are not familiar with this concept of personal cause and effect, teachers and staff should constantly discuss the importance of good work habits, such as attendance, hard work, and a good attitude, and the importance of education in general.

Modeling the language of the office. One way you can treat your students as adults and professional workers is to model the language of the office. The following are just a few expressions that you can use with your students as they suit you, the student, and the situation:

- No work, no paycheck.
- To employers, time is money. Wasting time is wasting money.
- This is like the Army—we want you to be all that you can be!
- My job is to help you develop the skills you will need to be successful in the workplace. Therefore, I am not going to permit you to sit here and sleep (rest, tune out, etc.).
- Goals are important. They provide you with direction to where you want to go in life and help you get there.
- Keep your workplace clean. This is your office. If you have pride in the workplace, you will take pride in your work and in yourself.
- People who work in offices do not line up at the door at quitting time. Have you ever been in a bank or office building where you saw the employees line up at the door at the end of the day? Stay at your desks until the bell rings.
- If you have a bad attitude now, you will still have it when you enter the workforce. People do not change overnight just because they graduate from high school. Therefore, while you are in this program, we are going to make sure that you develop a positive attitude.
- Let your fingers do the talking on the keyboards. Please be quiet—people are trying to do their work.
- Employers are not like teachers. They want you to do good work and to be there each day. If you are absent a lot or you do not do a good job, they will not send you to the principal's office—they will simply fire you. Therefore, while you are in this program, we are going to work to make sure that you develop good work habits.
- While you are in this program, we will do everything we can to help you improve your skills and to put you in touch with people and resources that will help you succeed in the real world and in the workplace. But *you* are responsible for your own progress.

Considering the Employer's Point of View

Another effective strategy for helping your students change inappropriate behavior is to have them consider it from an employer's perspective. Ask students what would happen to them if they talked when the boss was addressing an office meeting. They will invariably answer that they would be fired. When you use this line of reasoning when they do something they should not be doing, they will begin to understand how their behavior may seem to an employer.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Understanding what can be said and how it can be said in the workplace is a fundamental skill your students need to develop if they are to survive and thrive on the job. Although it may seem obvious to you, your students may not realize that swearing and slang are inappropriate in the workplace just as they are in your classroom. You may wish to remind students from time to time that office workers are professional and do not speak to one another in impolite ways.

Establishing a dress code. Establishing a dress code for your classroom is another effective way of mirroring the workplace and helping your students understand the importance of a professional appearance. One way to introduce this important topic is to have students consider how people dress for different activities. What do basketball players wear on the court? What do doctors wear when they meet with patients? Would students expect basketball players to wear pants and street shoes when they are on the court? Would students expect doctors to wear tank tops, shorts, and sneakers when they meet with patients? If not, then how should students expect to dress in an office setting? Your students' answers can turn into a revealing discussion on what comprises a professional appearance and help you establish a dress code for your 21st century classroom.

What Shall I Wear?

You may also have students research how people dress in a career that interests them. Do employees wear ties, suits, lab coats, hairnets? Have students identify the career that interests them and then determine what the dress code is in that career. How do people in that career project a professional image through what they wear?

Hats off! Many schools already have a no-hats policy. If yours does not, consider adopting a no-hats policy in your 21st century classroom. If you are unable to persuade your students, remind them that you are the CEO in this office, and that if they want to work there, they will remove their hats, or you will fire them. Generally, that is enough to get them to remove their hats. Be sure to compliment them on how professional they look without hats.

Dress for success program. The dress for success programs instituted at some high schools have inspired some students from very poor neighborhoods to go to college. At Jeremiah Burke High School in Boston, Massachusetts, senior boys receive two new shirts and three neckties, and senior girls receive two new blouses and skirts, courtesy of the T.J. Maxx Company's Dress for Success program.

The clothing is donated for students to use on job interviews, but it is also inspiring them to act and talk differently. Although the program at Jeremiah Burke is for seniors, students in the other classes are starting to dress up too, with corresponding increases in their self-esteem and goals. Some students who own suits are also wearing them to school.

This Dress for Success program has been expanded to include a fashion show of business wear and sportswear using student models and a seminar on how to dress for success with very little money. The company has also donated scholarship money and electronic equipment to the school and has provided workshops on interviewing techniques and building self-esteem. In the summer, the company hires 30 students to work in its stores.

Bernard Cammarata, Chairman of the Board for T.J. Maxx, began the retailer's Dress for Success program after reading about a similar program at the Boys and Girls High School in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, New York. The principal of that high school reported an increase in discipline and order and even an increase in the number of students continuing on to college after graduation. Now 70% of the school's senior class continues on to college. The Dress for Success program at the Boys and Girls High School requires boys to wear neckties from Monday through Wednesday and girls to wear Dress for Success clothing every Wednesday.

According to the New York City Board of Education, the school was the 22nd most dangerous high school in New York City in 1992. By 1997 it had dropped to the 87th. The Dress for Success program has clearly improved the quality of life at the school.

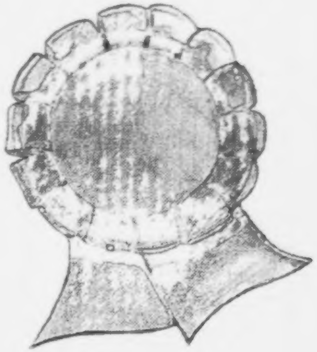
Because a Dress for Success program builds self-esteem and teaches students how to dress for the workplace, it could be a worthwhile addition to your 21st century program. If you are interested, try instituting a similar program at your site with a major employer in your area.

Encouraging student ownership. How do a vacuum cleaner, a rag, a bottle of glass cleaner, and a dust cloth promote student success in school and in the workplace? If these items are used to teach students the responsibility of taking care of their workplace, they also help students take ownership of their workplace. This tends to build pride in the workplace and a corresponding pride in work and self.

I try to maintain an immaculate office setting in the classroom. Students are required to pick up after themselves, dust the equipment and furniture, and clean the computer monitors as needed. In addition, the carpeted floor often needs to be vacuumed during the day, even though the custodian vacuums it after school. If students bring dirt or grass into the room on their shoes, they are responsible for vacuuming it up right away. They often do not even need to be told to get the vacuum cleaner. They simply do so on their own. This care for their environment builds a strong feeling of ownership in the classroom. This is their place, and they are very good about taking care of it.

Program Potential

Students who take pride in their workplace soon develop pride in their work and in themselves.



Office Worker of the Week

____

has been chosen as the Office Worker of the Week for

____

*Presented by:*______________________ *Date:*______________

Student Behavior Contract
21st Century Employment Program

I, ____, on this date, agree to the following rules of the 21st Century Workplace Classroom:

1. Any student who deliberately causes any form of destruction to any equipment or furnishings in the workplace classroom will immediately be removed from the class for the remainder of the school year.

2. Any student who is repeatedly disruptive in this program and prevents other students from learning will be removed from the class for the remainder of the school year.

3. Any student who has an excessive number of unexcused absences in this program will be removed from the class for the remainder of the school year.

4. Any student who brings a computer disk from outside the program into the workplace classroom and inserts it into computers in the room will be removed from the class for the remainder of the school year. This is to prevent the spread of computer viruses.

5. Any student who deliberately changes settings on the computers or tampers with the programming on the computers will be removed from the program for the remainder of the school year.

6. Any student who abuses Internet privileges and enters Web sites that are forbidden, or who surfs the Net instead of being on task, will lose Internet privileges for 30 days, and on the second infraction will be removed from the program for the remainder of the school year.

I understand these rules and the consequences for not following them.

Signed ____
Student Date

Signed ____
Parent or Guardian Date

Chapter 2

Notes on Reaching Today's Learner

Selecting Students for the Program

Multiage Groupings

Screening

Optimal Class Size

Success Breeds Success Strategies

Computers Motivate

One Minute for One Student

Always Be Caring

Set High Expectations

Use Performance-Based Student Assessment

Recognize Student Successes

Developing Responsibility

Building Commitment

Cooperative Learning

Learning Actively

Enjoying the Learning Experience

Staying Motivated and Accountable

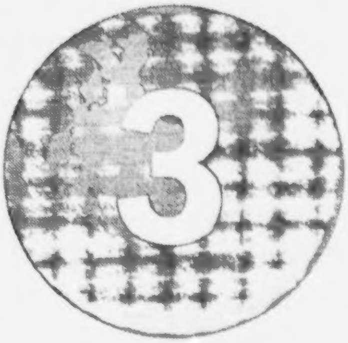
Modeling the Language of the Office

Establishing a Dress Code

Encouraging Student Ownership

Things to Do

Other Ideas



Chapter 3

The 21st Century Classroom

The 21st century classroom could simulate a wide range of workplace environments. For those who teach English, the classroom could become a professional office setting. For those who teach biology, the classroom could become a research laboratory. Those who teach history may want to simulate the office of a publisher that creates textbooks and software programs. The key to transforming the classroom into a professional workplace setting is to turn it into an environment students might encounter in the working world if they were to choose a career in that subject area.

Appendix A includes suggestions for setting up alternative classrooms for subject areas other than English and the language arts.

Creating the Learning Environment

The performance of students in this program will be profoundly affected by their learning environment. Students must see themselves as professional office workers. The more closely you can simulate an office setting, the easier it will be for your students to assume this new role and accept the program. This new role will increase your students' self-esteem and will also help diminish the stigma attached to a "literacy program."

The cost of providing an appropriate physical setting for this program for at-risk students is a social and economic bargain when compared to the cost to the community for the dropout problem and the cost to employers who have to teach basic skills to their employees. If your site is committed enough to implement this program, it should then be committed enough to provide an appropriate room in which to house it. The location tells the students that the program is valued and important.

Materials and Methods

Organizing and Redecorating the Room

To achieve the effect of an office atmosphere, the room for this program should be large enough to house up to 20 computer workstations in clusters. The computers should not be arranged in straight rows as is often done in the typical computer lab. The room will also need to be equipped with enough electrical outlets for all of the equipment.

The following sections provide suggestions on how you can transform your classroom into a professional office setting. As with other aspects of this program, you may need to customize this process based on the limitations of your site, completing the transformation as funds and materials become available.

Removing the chalkboard. If your room has a large chalkboard, request that it be removed. If possible, have it replaced with a smaller dry-erase board. The chalkboard is a hallmark of the traditional classroom, a visual reminder to at-risk students of their previous struggles. The 21st century classroom should tell students that this room is different, that in this room they will have a new chance to succeed.

If you are unable to remove the chalkboard, consider covering it with construction paper or another material and turning it into your classroom's Wall of Fame, complete with photos and other mementos of your students' activities, events, and accomplishments (see pages 28–29).

Painting the room. The room should be painted a light, cheerful color appropriate for an office. Some variation of off-white is probably the best selection. If possible, try to have the room freshly painted. However, this may not always be possible, and it may not be possible to arrange for this to be done in time for your equipment to be installed.

Instead of being a potential problem, painting the classroom can be a great opportunity for you, your students, volunteers, and parents to help prepare the room and to begin to take ownership of the program. It is likely that if you supply the painters, the district or site management will provide the paint, brushes, and rollers. If not, you can try to have these items donated by a business in the community. Be sure to give the business some publicity when you hold an open house, even if it is only a sign acknowledging that the paint was donated by that company.

Painting the room offers an opportunity for all of your volunteers to get to know each other better and to feel that they are part of a team. They will experience pride in their accomplishment when they see the room freshly painted, and they are likely to take better care of a room that they have prepared.

Carpeting your office classroom. If you can do only one thing now toward transforming your classroom, carpeting the room would be the best step to take. Carpeting is a virtual necessity for this classroom in order to simulate the office setting. In addition to improving appearance, carpeting reduces the noise level. Look for nonstatic carpeting and darker colors, for hiding spots and dust. The carpeting is probably the most expensive item, and you may need to have donated if your site does not have the funds for it.

Carpeting companies, construction companies, or any companies that are major employers in your community would be good prospects to approach for a donation of carpeting. You might want to approach these potential donors from this standpoint: for public education to succeed, it must be a partnership between the school and the business community. The bottom line is that companies can help prepare their future employees if they help you implement your program.

Providing office furniture. The furniture for this program should include computer workstations or desks for each computer and printer tables for the printers. Ideal chairs

"Everything is different in this classroom. The floor is carpeted, there is artwork on the walls, the computers are not in a row. . . . I guess what I'm trying to say is that the class is not a classroom. It's more like a working office."

—Ray

. . . .

"When I first walked in this room, I felt unbelievable . . . because the way it's set up is like a big business, like an office. I felt like I'm working on my job in the future."

—Nam Anh

. . . .

Whatever we do in this class is going to be expected of us in our future. . . . This program has taught me a lot. Before I came into this class, I never use to like to read; I hated to read. Now it doesn't bother me at all to read.

—Veronica

would swivel, have adjustable seats, be comfortable, and be covered with a dark-colored fabric or material.

At first you may have to improvise, as I did, and use existing school tables and chairs until you are able to obtain more appropriate office furniture. You may need to write a grant to purchase furniture, propose that your school district purchase furniture for you, ask local businesses to donate their used furniture to your program, or ask a corporation or community organization to donate new furniture to your program.

Installing telephone lines. You may be thinking to yourself, "Telephone lines?! That's a nice idea, but how many public school teachers have telephones in their classrooms?" The truth is, not many. However, the intent of this program is to ensure that our students graduate from high school prepared to succeed in the workplace and to compete in our economy. Running telephone lines into your classroom will provide you and your students with a direct link to the workplace.

The classroom should have at least one telephone and one—preferably two—outside lines: one for phone calls and a second for modem access to the Internet. The teacher will need the phone for placing service calls for the computers; arranging for guest speakers or mentors for students; contacting parents, counselors, probation officers, employers, and business partners; and securing community resources and arranging for career shadowing, mock job interviews, and an awards evening. The telephone can also be used to teach your students appropriate telephone etiquette and how to take proper and accurate telephone messages.

If your classroom does not have Internet access through the school server, then there should be a second telephone line for the computer modem. The telephone is an important part of the office environment and will help distinguish the 21st century classroom from the traditional classroom.

If you have a difficult time securing approval and the funds for one or more telephone lines, use the following arguments:

More Than a Solid Footing

Fourteen years after our carpeting was donated, we are still benefiting from our association with an executive at the interior design company. When our program began, I nervously called a builder to ask for a donation of carpeting. The response stunned me: "Would it be okay if I came by in a half hour with carpet samples?" Four days later, the new wall-to-wall carpeting had been installed!

This was the beginning of a long association with Steve. He visited the classroom several times to speak about the importance of attitude and good skills in the workplace. He also arranged for the students to tour the company's facility in Tucson, where we were given hands-on demonstrations of what several types of jobs involve. When Steve was transferred to San Diego, he continued serving as a guest speaker even as he launched his own design facility.

Steve's desire to contribute to schools that are preparing students for the workplace is indicative of the business sector's willingness to invest in its future workforce by donating time, money, and materials today.

1. A telephone will enable you to provide support for students by enlisting community involvement in the program (through the mentoring program, internships with employers, interaction with counselors and probation officers, literacy classes for parents, and other program activities and events). The benefits gained by your students and the program are far greater in terms of financial and human resources than the cost of a telephone.

2. A telephone will enable you to add to the realism of the simulated office environment in the 21st century classroom. It will be a key part in helping students prepare for the workplace by enabling you to model proper telephone etiquette and language and enabling your students to use the telephone to organize school events as assigned.

3. A telephone will enable you to troubleshoot problems with a computer. When placing service calls, the service support staff are likely to ask you to take the telephone over to the computer so the technician can help you solve the problem, if possible, and avoid an on-site visit.

The main objections to installing a telephone in your 21st century classroom will likely be cost and the possibility of vandalism. The issue of cost has been addressed above. You may also emphasize that students are required to sign behavior contracts in your 21st century classroom and that they will be removed from the program for any type of vandalism in the classroom. Furthermore, the telephone will be placed on your desk, which is an off-limits area for students. In this setting, students will be taught to respect the equipment, the room, and their student co-workers.

The main objections to installing a telephone in your 21st century classroom will likely be cost and the possibility of vandalism.

Adding technology. Do not give up if your school has very little or out-of-date technology and the prospects of obtaining computers for your classroom seem dim. There are new ways of securing what you need that were not available even 5 years ago, due in part to an increasing commitment from business, industry, and the federal government to ensure that all students have access to a computer and the

Internet. Your most likely source of funding or materials will be local businesses and organizations.

In this program, the computer is the central tool of instruction, not an occasional resource in a computer lab that students use once a week. Bringing the computer into the classroom and making it an integral part of instruction is an essential part of reinventing the classroom to help students develop 21st century workplace skills.

> *A minimum level online connection to servers and the Internet, with a computer in the home and in the school, is the minimum we should have for each child. These are the pencils and papers of today and every school in this country should have those 'pencils and paper.' . . . I think it is criminal that we don't give all students everywhere in this country the basic education tools to compete.*
>
> —Raymond W. Smith,
> Chairman and CEO of
> Bell Atlantic Corporation,
> "Innovative Learning Environments,"
> *T.H.E. Journal* (December 1996)

Hardware. Because the level of technology in the classroom and access to computers in general varies from school to school, two lists of equipment needs are provided below. The optimal list includes all of the equipment the program requires. The minimal list includes the minimum pieces of equipment you will need to implement your program. Possible sources of obtaining computers are also provided below.

Optimal Equipment Needs

Because technology is changing so rapidly, it would be of little value to list hardware specifications here. The important thing to do before obtaining computers for your program is to get information on the software that you plan to run and determine its hardware requirements. The requirements listed here are based on a class size of 20 students.

- 20 computer workstations
- 20 monitors
- 1 laser printer
- 1 fax machine

Minimal Equipment Needs

The following requirements are based on a class size of 20 students.

- 12 computer workstations (Place 3 computers together in 4 different areas of the office classroom, and organize each area as a department that can be used by a group of 5 students.)
- 12 monitors

- 1 laser printer
- 1 fax machine

Potential sources of equipment. You may need to seek donations from area businesses or funding from grant programs to meet your equipment needs. Consider the following potential sources of equipment or of funds for purchasing equipment:

- The school district.
- The court system, Department of Economic Security, or community college.
- Local corporations or employers. Ask if they would donate used equipment to your program when they purchase equipment upgrades.
- Organizations that provide grant funding for educational projects. Write a grant for the funds needed to purchase the equipment for your program.
- Businesses that lease computers. Leasing equipment may be a better way to obtain your computers than purchasing them. This allows for a smaller initial expense when you first get your computers, and it permits you to replace the computers every 2 or 3 years, thereby maintaining relatively up-to-date technology in your workplace.
- Title I or Special Education funds. You might be able to use this money for computers or software as long as your program serves the student populations stipulated by these funds. For more specific information on these two sources of funding, consult the Title I director or office and the Special Education director or office in your district.

Decorating with plants and artwork. An easy way to simulate an office setting is to hang paintings and other artwork on the walls and to place some silk plants in the room. Silk plants tend to be more practical than real plants in this setting.

In this program, the computer is the central tool of instruction, not an occasional resource in a computer lab that students use once a week.

A Sign of Success

When our program began nearly 14 years ago, I placed two silk plants on the two writing tables in the center of the room. Numerous colleagues said at that time, "Do you honestly think that those two silk plants are going to survive more than a week?" Fourteen years later, the two silk plants are almost like new. They might be missing a few leaves, but they are one example of how much pride the students have taken in their "workplace."

Paintings and artwork add color and a touch of culture to the room. They also contribute to the office-type atmosphere. Both artwork and plants are items that you can probably get businesspersons or organizations to donate. If not, see if your district has a media arts center or resource center that provides artwork on loan to teachers. In some communities, public libraries have similar programs of lending artwork to library patrons. Another option may be to hang large color prints, which may be purchased at a local print store.

Adding other office accessories. Other room accessories you might consider include an electric pencil sharpener, a fax machine, a battery-operated office-type wall clock, and a donated time clock. These optional accessories do add to the visual perception that this is an office, not a classroom, and they do have some benefits. The electric sharpener is a novelty to the students, and so they generally regard it as something special, and take extra care of it. (And they will eagerly volunteer to sharpen pencils for you!) If you use a donated time clock and provide each student with a time card, you reinforce the students' responsibility for coming to class on time and working until class is over. Fax machines have become standard equipment in most businesses and organizations. To work with business partners, students' mentors, and others in your community, you will need a fax machine. In many instances, businesspeople will ask you to fax information to them, and they will fax documents to you. Mentors frequently fax notes or motivational messages to their students, and you will need to be able to receive them. Fax machines have other benefits as well. They may be used to make copies, and they often have speakerphones. Thus, if you would like a caller to speak to your students, you can put that person on speakerphone on the fax machine so that all of the students can listen to him or her. Fax machines can generally be purchased for about $150.

Taking Charge One Step at a Time

Whether you can implement all of these suggestions before you launch your program or must implement them

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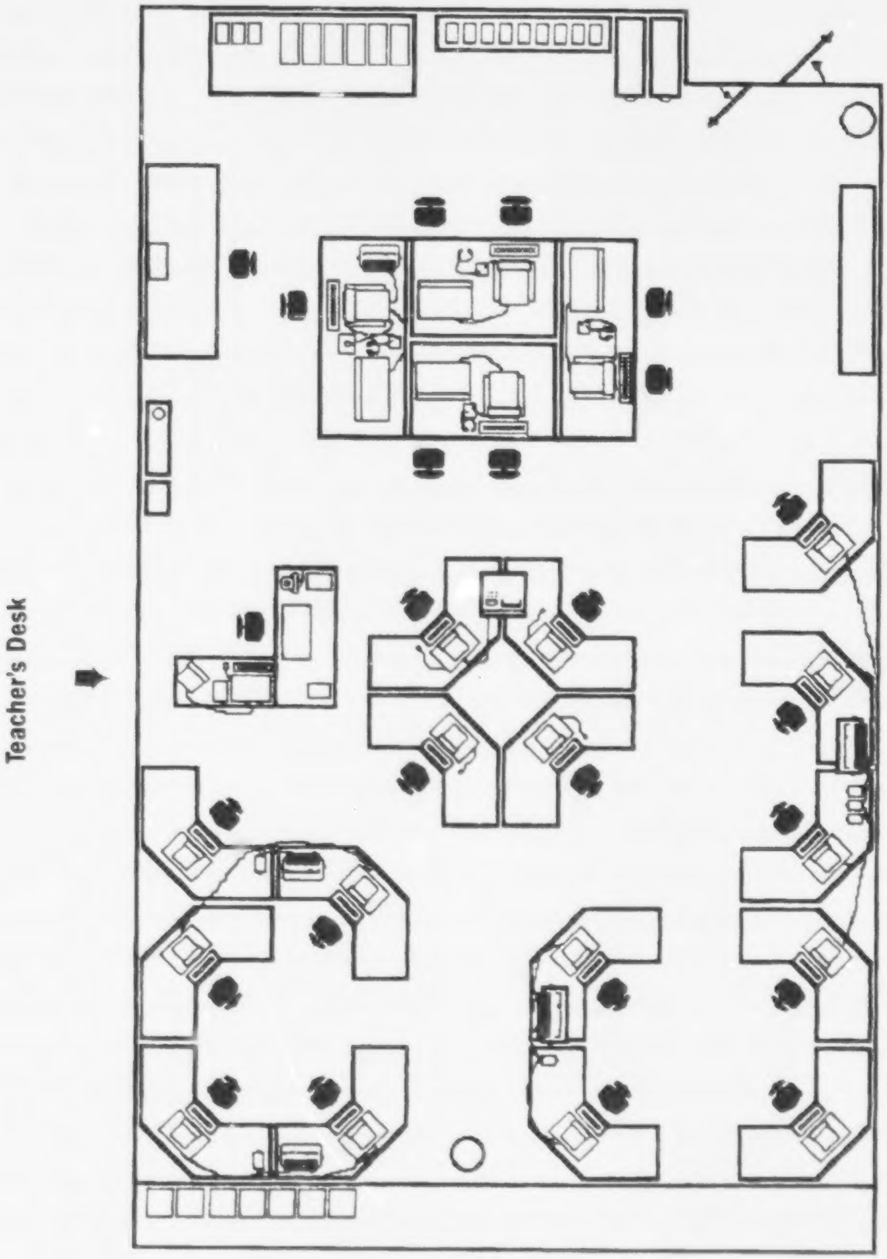
gradually as you gain support, funds, and materials, you will be transforming your classroom one step at a time. If you must walk slowly at first toward your goal, take the steps you can and enlist community support to help you complete the process. Through all the steps you take, however, remember this: You are the key to making your 21st century classroom a reality. Your drive and your enthusiasm will motivate your students to accept their new professional roles, rally administrators to support your efforts, and encourage community members to freely give of their time and resources. If you can take only a few key steps now, take them and then work toward taking the next few steps. With effort, persistance, and imagination, you can transform your classroom into a professional workplace setting.

Sample Floor Plan

This floor plan has worked well for my classroom. You may want to modify it to suit your needs and the size of your classroom. You may also want to involve your students in the process, creating a project for team building in which you and the students work together to procure furniture and rearrange the classroom. Consider arranging for a field trip to several team-oriented workplaces so you and your students can study the office settings.



My 21st Century Classroom Floor Plan

The grid below is helpful in planning your classroom's transformation into a 21st century employment classroom.

Chapter 3

Notes on Preparing My 21st Century Classroom

Creating the Learning Environment

Removing the Chalkboard

Painting the Room

Carpeting the Office Classroom

Providing Office Furniture

Installing Telephone Lines

Adding Technology

Hardware Requirements for the Software I Intend to Use

Hardware

Optimal Version (20 computers, 1 laser printer, and 1 fax machine)

Possible Sources of Equipment:

Minimal Version (12 computers, 1 laser printer, and 1 fax machine)

Possible Sources of Equipment:

Decorating With Plants and Artwork

74

Adding Other Office Accessories

Things to Do

Other Ideas

Chapter 4

Building Public Awareness

Increasing public awareness and support is a vital step in ensuring your program's long-term success. Members of the community must first know about your program before they will support it with their time, money, and donated materials. This chapter covers several effective strategies for building public awareness and community partnerships.

Holding an Open House

One way to build public awareness of your program is to invite business leaders, community officials, and school administrators to an open house. If possible, assign students to give tours and discuss the types of activities or assignments students are completing. The photos you have taken during previous activities and events can be arranged on a Wall of Fame as a visual record of some of the program's activities. You may also want to have students work on different computer programs so guests can see your 21st century program in action.

You can also use the open house to thank the businesses or organizations that have donated time, money, or materials to your program by posting signs that acknowledge these donations and thank the particular organization. If you have a program or brochure to hand out at the open house, you

Special Events

Dear Mr. Alvarez,

Thank you for coming into our class and sharing your life with us. The things you went through growing up are reality for myself and the other kids. To see someone rise up from that and make something of themselves gives us hope. Some days I wonder why I'm still in school. I could be making easy money. It's hard to stay focused. Your words will keep me on track and doing the right thing. I always thought that speakers came to talk to help their image and they really don't care about us. You changed how I view some people. Thank you again for taking the time to come and share some of yourself with us. Even though we may never speak again, your words will always be carried by me. Also, I would like to let you know that you accomplished your goal of reaching a student.

Sincerely,

Manny

can include the names of organizations that have supported your program on the back.

Inviting Businesspeople as Guest Speakers

Another way to make the business community aware of your program is to invite businesspeople to speak to your students about what employers expect from employees and to emphasize the importance of a good attitude in the workplace. The advice given by actual employers regarding successful workplace behavior generally has a much greater impact on students than the same advice given by teachers.

Guests from the business world. Inviting businesspeople into your classroom may have unexpected benefits. Three examples of how this worked in my program are described below.

Invited for a test drive. The vice president of a software company was recently a guest speaker for my classes. My students were fascinated by his presentation on how video games are produced and on the jobs available in the industry. When they asked if his company ever had teenagers test new video games, he invited six students to test a new game under development.

Video advisor. After speaking to my class, a television news anchorman volunteered to serve as an advisor to our seniors who were producing a 10-minute videotape about our program.

Tips for future employees. Another guest speaker was the director of computer training for a large health maintenance organization (HMO). The director later arranged for the HMO's human resources director and three other employees to speak to my students on writing a resume that would catch their attention during the hiring process. Three of my students were later hired by that HMO.

Successful people as motivational speakers. Some of the most powerful guest speakers are successful people in business and other fields who have overcome numerous adversities along their journeys to success. Ask these people to share their stories and to discuss how they overcame the obstacles that they faced in their lives. I have three guest speakers who never fail to inspire and motivate my students. All of them are extremely effective at connecting with the students because the students can really relate to their stories. These real-life stories of overcoming obstacles are much more meaningful to young people than teacher presentations on how to be successful.

Whenever possible, I try to arrange for speakers who come from the same diverse cultures and backgrounds as my students. This teaches students that everyone can be successful, regardless of gender or cultural background.

The day after a guest speaker addresses my class, I require that students write thank-you letters. I am always amazed at how specific their comments are as they recount the points the speakers made that had a significant effect on them. They often share with the speakers how they plan to apply what they learned from the presentations to their own lives. Speakers really appreciate receiving packets of students' thank-you letters illustrating the positive impact of their words.

Holding a Celebrate Literacy Evening

Consider holding an awards ceremony or a "Celebrate Literacy" evening at the end of each year to recognize students for their achievements. This is an excellent opportunity not only to honor students and boost their self-esteem but also to highlight your program's successes.

This ceremony can be particularly powerful if you have instituted evening classes for parents and other adults, as it gives you the opportunity to present certificates and awards to two generations of students. Having students and their parents receive certificates at the same ceremony makes for a very touching and significant event and builds community support for your program. The following suggestions may help you plan a Celebrate Literacy evening.

Having students and their parents receive certificates at the same ceremony makes for a very touching and significant event and builds community support for your program.

Plan the ceremony to fit your program and your students. This kind of evening is a wonderful opportunity to showcase various events, praise students for their successes, and thank members of the community for their generosity. You might consider creating a slide show with music or a brief videotape about your program and showing it during the evening. Be sure to focus on the students because most of them love to see themselves on the screen and will be especially proud of their appearance if their families are in the audience.

Arrange for an effective guest speaker. If you have any families with two generations in your classes, try to arrange for speeches by the teen and the parent. These paired speeches can be one of the most popular parts of the program. If you have implemented the mentoring component of the program, speeches by the teens and their mentors can also enhance this event.

Arrange for refreshments and entertainment after the ceremony. The generosity of the community may amaze you if you simply ask for support. For four of our annual Celebrate Literacy evenings, a mariachi band played for the reception at no charge. This made the evening very special.

Give your students something for their achievements. You may also wish to make special awards at this ceremony. Present your students with certificates of achievement. You may be able to obtain certificates of achievement from the office of the governor or secretary of state.

Popular gifts to award for special achievements such as excellent improvement, excellent grades, perfect attendance, or outstanding performance are gift certificates for bookstores, restaurants, workout time in a gym, or admission to entertainment centers such as museums and theaters. Seek these gift certificates as donations from businesses in the community.

Over the past several years, the business community in our area has responded generously and enthusiastically to letters asking for donations of gift certificates to award to students for their achievement. In many cases, the gift certificate envelopes we receive from businesses include letters thanking us for allowing them to participate in this worthwhile event. I believe that this is indicative of the prevailing mood of the business sector nationwide—genuine interest in investing in improving our public education system.

On the back of the program for a Celebrate Literacy evening, list all of the businesses that have contributed gift certificates, as well as those who support the program by providing mentors, guest speakers, interviewers for mock job interviews, or donations for college scholarships for students. Along with the thank-you letter sent to each of the supporters, include a copy of the program so they can see that they were recognized at the event. Businesses appreciate this gesture as well as the opportunity for the public to see the name of their company listed as a supporter of education.

Program Potential

A "Celebrate Literacy" evening is an opportunity to recognize those businesses and organizations that have supported your program.

On the front cover of the program for a Celebrate Literacy evening, it is a good idea to list the various segments of the community that are involved in your program as partners, participants, or supporters. In the case of the program I teach and coordinate, these include the state supreme court, the school district, the local community college, mentors, students, parents, teachers, volunteers, and business and community partners. Without all of these segments of the community working together for the benefit of young people, our program would not be as effective as it has been. Listing them on the front of the program gives them ownership in the program and inspires pride in the program and in students' achievements.

I try to make the evening particularly special for the seniors who are earning their high school diplomas by presenting awards to the outstanding seniors and also presenting some students with scholarships to the community college.

Present one or two "Person of the Year" awards every year. If possible, commemorate these awards on engraved plaques and give them to those people who have done a great deal for your program that year. If you have a program brochure for your Celebrate Literacy evening, include a paragraph or two about each Person of the Year.

Planning and Preparing for a Celebrate Literacy Evening

Planning a Celebrate Literacy evening may seem like the last thing you want to do at the end of a school year, but it can be a tremendous boost for you and your students. I have found that these evenings offer a wonderful opportunity to accomplish several things:

- They bring families together to celebrate the importance of the achievements of teens and their parents and to emphasize the importance of education and graduation.
- For the adult students, many of whom have not been in school for many years, this event conveys the importance of returning to school to further one's education and to become a lifelong learner.
- Business leaders, community members, and district officials learn about the various aspects of the program. It is also an opportunity to recognize and thank those businesses and organizations that have supported the program.
- Often you will find that your program will gain new supporters from those who attend your Celebrate Literacy evening. For example, a judge from the county superior court attended our last Celebrate Literacy evening. When one of our district administrators was unable to present the certificates to our students and shake their hands, I asked the judge to substitute for her. Not only was he delighted to do so, but he has asked if he might also do so at our event next year.

Select the date and location. Plan to hold your Celebrate Literacy evening sometime in May, close to the end of the school year, but early enough so that it will not conflict with other end-of-year events. To obtain the date and place you would like for your event, make reservations about 1 year in advance. Then begin planning and preparations for your Celebrate Literacy evening sometime in January.

During the first few years of our program, I held this event at the school auditorium. I then moved it to the local convention center for about 4 years, and for the past 7 years, it has been held at a downtown hotel. The hotel ballroom atmosphere makes the event very special for the students, and attendance has increased tremendously since the event was moved out of the school. For many parents of at-risk youth, school evokes unpleasant or uncomfortable memories. Parents are much more likely to attend an event at a community location outside school. Each year our event is well attended by students and their families and friends (about 300 people). In addition, we have high attendance by business partners, people from the court system, community college staff, school administrators and teachers, school district administrators, and school board members.

One of the first things to do when you begin planning is to contact hotels or the convention center in your area to inquire about the cost for this event. You will need a large function room (or small ballroom) set up auditorium-style, with a raised platform and microphone at the front to present awards and introduce speakers. We hold a reception with light refreshments after the ceremony. The refreshment table is placed in the foyer outside the room. Refreshments can include snacks such as cookies, brownies, fruit, lemonade, and coffee.

Get businesses or organizations to sponsor the event. Once you reserve a location and date for your event, write letters to businesses and organizations in your area that are supportive of your program and invite them to help sponsor your Celebrate Literacy evening. Be sure to list the names of the sponsors on the inside of the program for the evening and thank them publicly at the conclusion of the event.

Create a brochure, Web site, or Web page to promote your program. An easy way to inform the public about your program is to create a brochure. Keep a supply of them in your room to distribute on parent-teacher conference evenings, open houses, or whenever visitors come to your classroom. Your brochure should briefly describe your program and should list your school/business partners. Be sure to include the telephone number of your program and other contact information so that people will be able to reach you. Consider including students' comments about your program on the back; they tend to be very powerful and compelling.

If you have an opportunity, create a Web page about your program for your school Web site. Again, be sure to explain what your program is all about and highlight your school/business/community partners. Create links to your partners' Web sites.

Proof Positive

Documenting Student Success

It is extremely important that you find an organized way to document your students' progress. Documenting the successes of your program in a database will provide you with the material you need to build public support. You may already have a documentation system in place that includes many or all of the following suggestions:

- Create individual data records in a database program that includes each student's name, age, sex, ethnic background, grade level, pretest scores, posttest scores, and any other data that might be pertinent to your program.
- Test all students in the beginning and near the end of the year. Enter these scores into the database.
- Save writing samples from your students from the beginning and end of the year.
- Make a permanent, confidential data folder for each student, and place all of the students' tests and writing samples into it.

Distributing Annual Reports

You will probably be asked to submit an annual report on your program to your organization or school. You may be asked to submit semiannual reports. The student data that you collect will be extremely important when you write your reports. Your report should include average pretest scores, average posttest scores, and average gains. You can also break the data down by groups of students and show average test scores by ethnic group, by age, gender, or other categories relevant to your program and your organization or school. Consider using pie charts or bar graphs to make the data easier to understand. Include a few early and later writing samples at the end of the report as further examples of student progress.

You may also need to include other information relevant to your organization. For instance, your organization may be interested in how many of your students are related to other students, how many students are employed full-time or part-time, or how many students are on probation with the criminal justice system. Also include any narrative data, such as student essays on how they view the program and any comments from other teachers or employers regarding changes they have observed in these students since they entered the program.

Writing the report will be time consuming, but it will be worth it. A report will validate your program and provide you with an objective summary you can give to any administrator who asks for documentation of your program's results. It may also be used to justify the purchase of additional software or equipment when you ask for funds from the school or district or submit grants for funding or materials to businesses or organizations.

You can also use the annual report as an impressive introduction to individuals in the community when you attempt to establish partnerships between the community and your program.

The more partnerships you can establish with the community, the richer your program will be and the more your students will benefit.

Establishing Community Partnerships

One of the rewards of your public relations efforts will be the opportunity to establish partnerships with businesses and organizations in your community. The more partnerships you can establish with the community, the richer your program will be and the more your students will benefit. Suggestions for the types of partnerships you might consider pursuing include the following:

A partnership with the local community college. Try to arrange to offer adult evening classes in your classroom through the community college so that the adults receive college credit for the courses.

Partnerships with employers in your community. Try to arrange for mentors for your students (see chapter 5) or guest speakers from a variety of careers. These partnerships often provide opportunities for your students to visit businesses and even "shadow" persons in a variety of careers for half a day.

A partnership with the local newspaper. Try to arrange for free newspapers so that your students can learn about current events. Remind the newspaper publisher that the paper's circulation depends upon a literate public and that his or her modest contribution today could yield lifelong subscribers.

Partnerships with local contractors or builders. Try to arrange for the donation of interior design items for your classroom (e.g., window coverings such as vertical blinds, graphics to be painted on the wall, wall hangings) in exchange for offering free attendance at your adult literacy classes to any of the company's employees who need them.

Other suggestions include partnerships with the courts or Department of Justice, utility companies, the state department that oversees the JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act), the Urban League, local adult basic education efforts, and Literacy Volunteers of America.

Making Partnerships Happen

As you begin to approach businesses and community organizations to establish school/business/community partnerships, keep the following items in mind to help ensure a greater degree of success:

Teachers must become the CEOs of their own classrooms. Always approach a business or community organization as the CEO of your classroom or program and not as a teacher who is looking to the business community to provide what the school district cannot afford. Remember that you are important to the business community, and your students are their future employees.

Don't be afraid to ask. Teachers are often so used to being told what to do and what to teach that they are sometimes hesitant to ask businesses or other employers in the community to help them to effect change in their classrooms. Teachers are also used to hearing that there simply are not any funds available from their school districts. So when teachers ask their schools or districts for something and get the "no funds" response, many teachers give up and accept the status quo. Today businesses and other employers are not only willing but also eager to establish partnerships with educators. All you have to do is *ask*.

Go to the top. When approaching a corporation or employer, ask for a meeting with the CEO or president or with the head of Community Relations or Community Partnerships. You will find that your chances of success are greater if you communicate with the actual decision makers of the organization.

R.O.I. is important to corporate America and to employers. R.O.I., or *return on investment*, is very important to employers. When establishing a school/business/community partnership, be sure to find out what the business or community partners would like as a return for their investment. In many cases, it is simply some public recognition, such as a newspaper ad thanking them or a plaque that you present to them at a public event. This is very important to them as they build a public image in the community. Many employers in the high-tech and medical sectors are very interested in getting enough applicants with workplace skills; your program helps to develop these skills in potential future applicants.

The court can be a powerful partner for your program. In addition to community and business partners, consider exploring the possibility of forming a partnership with the court system in your state. The obvious correlation between illiteracy and criminal inclination is well recognized by the courts. About 85% of juvenile offenders are functionally illiterate. Studies show that recidivism rates decrease when people are educated and can read and write. The state supreme court may have a fund designated for the prevention or reduction of juvenile crime. These are the monies that the courts often use to fund prevention education programs. Because the program outlined in this book promotes the development of literacy skills and 21st century workplace skills, as well as the development of social and personal responsibility, it is a form of preventive education.

The court can be a powerful and highly effective partner for your program. The program I coordinate and teach has enjoyed a wonderful, supportive partnership with the Arizona Supreme Court for 14 years. One of the many ways that the court has been supportive is by furnishing us with computers, printers, and reading software. The court provides us with new, upgraded computers about every 4 years and is now exploring the possibility of leasing computers and replacing them every 2 years.

For the past 3 years, the chief justice of the Arizona Supreme Court has attended and participated in our annual Celebrate Literacy evening. Each year, he emphasizes that the court considers the LEARN Program (of which we are a part) to be a very good investment. His presence sends a clear and powerful message to our students about the importance of literacy education and lifelong learning, and encourages our business partners and leaders to participate in the event as well.

Our affiliation with the Arizona Supreme Court has also been helpful in cultivating support for the program from other segments of the community. When I approach businesses and other organizations to invite them to become involved with the program at some level, whether as partners or as potential sources of jobs or internships for our students, I have never received a negative response. Once I explain that our program is a partnership between our school district and the court and aims to keep at-risk youth out of the criminal justice system by helping them to develop literacy and workplace skills, people acknowledge that these sound strategies will benefit the entire community.

Chapter 4
Notes on Building Public Awareness

Holding an Open House

Inviting Businesspeople as Guest Speakers

Guests From the Business World

Successful People as Motivational Speakers

Holding and Planning a "Celebrate Literacy" Evening

Creating a Brochure, Web Site, or Web Page to Promote Your Program

Documenting Student Success

Distributing Annual Reports

Establishing Community Partnerships

Community Colleges

Employers

Local Newspaper

Department of Economic Security (DES)

Construction or Interior Design Companies

Utility Companies

Other Civic Organizations

Things to Do

Other Ideas

Chapter 5

The Mentoring Program

Mentoring is a powerful strategy for teaching students how to succeed in today's society by providing positive adult role models for students. Probably one of the best things you can do for your students, especially if they are at risk, is to add a mentoring program to your 21st century employment program. Mentors from local businesses and organizations will help your students succeed in school and in the workplace by helping them set goals, develop their self-esteem, assume social and personal responsibility, and plan and prepare for a career. In many cases, students will be able to shadow their mentor on the job and have a firsthand look at what their future career might involve. This chapter explains the dynamics of the mentoring relationship and will help you plan and implement a mentoring program. Although the mentoring program will involve considerable work and planning on your part, it will also be one of the most beneficial things you can do for your students.

What Do Mentors Do?

A mentor is a working adult who is paired with a student who has similar interests and/or career aspirations. Mentors assist students with their career plans and help them determine how to achieve their career goals. Effective mentors might also help students with college applications, *Mentors talk to their students on a regular basis and provide sound advice.*

job applications, financial aid forms, and mock job interviews. Mentors may make time in their schedules for their students to shadow them on the job or arrange for their students to shadow other adults in similar positions within the same business or organization. Mentors might also take students to cultural events, restaurants, sporting or entertainment events, or college campuses.

Mentors help increase their students' self-esteem and self-confidence. They check on how their students are doing in school and make sure that they are attending classes and doing the work. They talk to their students on a regular basis and provide sound advice. Mentors can become friends with whom students share their concerns and problems.

One of the most helpful things a mentor can do is show the student how to work through the system of applying for college. Many students are intimidated by "the system" and can be easily frustrated by bureaucracy. If a student completes all of the necessary paperwork for applying to a community college, for example, and then encounters even a minor roadblock in the application process, he or she may give up and never submit the application or secure the extra paperwork required. A mentor can encourage the student to work through any roadblocks.

Benefits

How Do Students Benefit?

Any student can benefit from the experience of having a mentor. The mentoring experience is especially beneficial for at-risk students, such as those who come from dysfunctional families, are very shy, have attendance problems, are doing poorly in school, or come from a disadvantaged socioeconomic background. In addition to being a friend, "big sister or big brother," counselor, and role model, mentors also introduce students to lifestyles and opportunities that these students may have never seen before. They can also show the students how to take advantage of those opportunities and achieve a better life.

How Do Mentors Benefit?

Mentors who are genuinely committed to mentoring students agree that the rewards of mentoring are great and that they get as much out of the program as the students do. A mentor can make a real difference for a student and can watch that student turn his or her life around and achieve success. Several times I have seen a student's grades improve significantly because of a mentor's involvement in his or her life.

Mentors can also take pride in seeing their students gain poise and self-confidence as a result of their involvement. Mentors have been directly responsible for at least four of my students deciding to stay in school and earn their high school diplomas.

Recruiting Mentors

Getting Started

One effective way to recruit mentors is to arrange speaking engagements for you or someone from your program at meetings of service organizations such as the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs or the Chamber of Commerce. Other excellent places to find mentors are any agencies under the United States Department of Justice, such as the United States Border Patrol or the Federal Bureau of Prisons, because former Attorney General Janet Reno asked Department of Justice employees to volunteer time in programs for at-risk students. The Air National Guard is another organization whose employees participate as mentors for my students. Other participants in my mentoring program are from health maintenance organizations, businesses, and the local university.

When you speak to employees of a local business or agency, ask the organization's representative to include an article on the mentoring program in the employee newsletter or distribute an article through e-mail. This will be an effective reminder of your presentation and serve as a second invitation to employees interested in becoming mentors.

One of the stumbling blocks to people becoming mentors is their fear of the time commitment it may involve. One way to remove this barrier is to ask the employer to donate several hours of their participating employees' time each week or month to the mentoring program. If you can arrange this, be sure to mention it in your presentation and make sure it is clearly repeated in the follow-up article in the employee newsletter or e-mail message.

If the district wants the community to become involved, they can send no clearer message of their commitment than becoming involved as well.

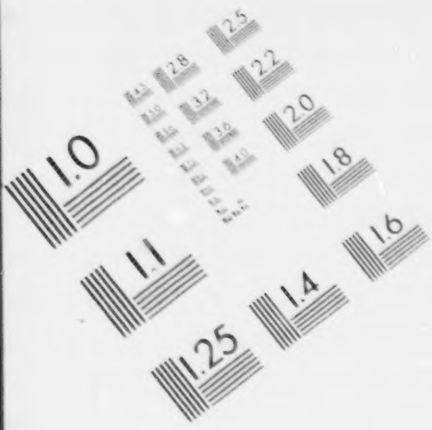
As you develop partnerships with the local business and government community, also remember to seek mentors from your school district. To do so, you will probably need to approach the administrative staff in the central office regarding the mentoring opportunity for their district employees. You may find it helpful to stress that if the district wants the community and business sectors to become involved in this mentoring program, they can send no clearer message of their commitment than by becoming involved as well.

Selecting Mentors

Because mentors work closely with students and have a significant impact on the students' outlooks, it is very important to carefully screen the adults who volunteer to mentor students in your program. Be sure to determine the person's area of expertise and work experience and contact his or her current employer to verify that he or she is employed there. I have found it helpful to form partnerships with large employers and then involve the employer in the screening process. In this kind of partnership, the employer prescreens employees and recommends those who "pass" to participate as mentors.

You can help employers prescreen their employees by including a section on the mentor application to be completed by the employer. You may also wish to do some prescreening on your own by selecting employers who already conduct thorough screening of their employees, including criminal background checks.

You will also want to determine the prospective mentor's ethnic background and first language and try to match the mentor with a student who has a similar background. The mentoring program is particularly effective when minority students are paired with successful minority professionals.



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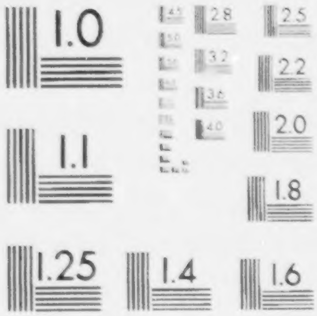

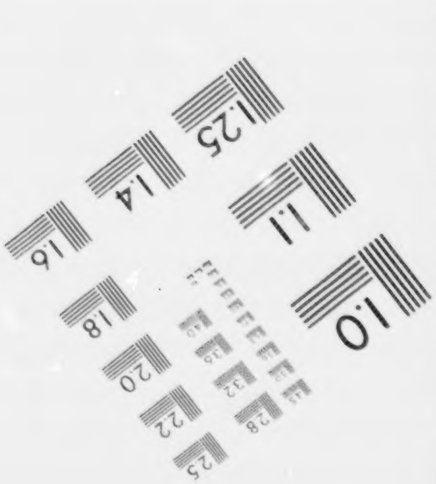

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This is also true of young women when they are paired with successful professional women.

Personality and interests are also important criteria to consider when selecting mentors. Because the mentors often fill a void in the student's life that was created by the lack of a supportive family, you may find that your most effective mentors are "big brother or big sister" types or "Mom or Dad" types who are warm and friendly and are willing to encourage and nurture the student.

Matching Students With Mentors

The following four guidelines will help you match students with appropriate mentors. The guidelines are listed in their order of importance, with the first being the most important.

Same gender. In matching students with mentors, *always match students with mentors of the same gender.* This is a wise policy for the protection of both student and mentor, because most cases of sexual harrassment or sexual assault involve a victim of the opposite sex. More important, pairing students with someone of their gender can have many positive effects. Many at-risk male students may not have a positive adult male role model in their lives. A male mentor could become that role model. Many at-risk female students come from homes where gender equality is not promoted. Pairing your female students with successful, professional female mentors will help these students see that women can be successful in all professions, working as managers, doctors, attorneys, pilots, firefighters, etc.

Same race or ethnic background. *Try to match students with mentors of the same racial or ethnic background.* This is particularly important for minority students who benefit from interacting with successful minority professionals in the community. This interaction can do wonders for their self-esteem and encourage them to set much higher career goals than they might otherwise set.

Career of interest. *Try to match the student with a mentor who is in a career of interest to the student.* If this is not possible, try to match the student with a mentor who can arrange for the student to shadow someone who works in the student's career of interest.

Consider student needs. *Consider the student's needs and try to match him or her with a mentor who will be able to meet those needs.* The student may need a mentor who is a good listener or a mentor who has contacts with social service agencies. The student may need a mentor who is bilingual or one who will help the student practice English in order to develop fluency in the language.

Do not worry if you are unable to meet all of these guidelines in matching mentors to your students. As long as your student is paired with a caring person who is really committed to helping, chances are that the student will benefit from the experience.

Introductions

Launching Your Mentoring Program

Once you have paired students with mentors, there are a few things you can do to make the initial meeting between them go more smoothly. You can help prepare your students by discussing what mentors are and how the students may benefit from their association with mentors. You can ask your students to write down what they would like to accomplish with their mentors by the end of the school year (provide them with opportunities to career shadow, complete college applications, become their friends, etc.). Ask students to be prepared to share this information with their mentors at the first meeting. You can also talk with your students about how to introduce themselves to their mentors.

I usually ask students to present their employability skills portfolios to their mentors so mentors have an idea of their students' backgrounds, career interests, and skill levels. It is also helpful to discuss ways to break the ice on their first meeting because students are often apprehensive and may fear they will not know what to say to their mentors.

You can help prepare the mentor by providing him or her with an information sheet on the student. What is the student's name, age, and ethnic background? What are the student's academic and career interests? What are the student's needs? Special talents? The answers will give the mentor some information on the student at their first meeting and will help allay the *mentor's* possible fear of not knowing what to say.

Mentor orientation and training. Hold an orientation and training session before you introduce the mentors to your students. If you hold this session an hour or two before your student/mentor reception (see below), you will minimize the time your mentors have to take from their work or other obligations. This option has worked well for our mentors. We have an orientation and training session in the school library during the lunch hour, with a light lunch provided by the home economics cooking class. About 90 minutes later, the students enter the library for the reception during which they will be introduced to their mentors. Students share in the refreshments, which often helps to break the ice.

You might also hold the orientation or training session in the offices of the employer with the greatest number of mentors in your program. Invite all of the mentors to meet there during the lunch hour. You might ask them to bring their lunches, or the host employer may offer to provide refreshments. A third option is to hold the orientation and training in your 21st century classroom.

The orientation session is a good time to provide mentors with information on your program, the needs of your students, and school regulations on how and when mentors can meet with their students on campus or off campus. Mentors should be encouraged to meet with their students after school or on weekends. However, because mentors may need to meet with their students during school hours to pick them up for career shadowing or to take them to meetings with counselors or financial aid officials, mentors need to know the school policy for these kinds of leave. As the teacher, you will also need to be sure that students have their parents or guardians sign the necessary permission forms before any field trips.

The orientation session is a good time to provide mentors with information on the needs of your students.

You may also recommend that mentors spend at least one hour per week with their students, either in person or on the telephone. Suggest that they keep a log of the time they spend with their students, including telephone calls.

Introducing students and mentors. Make the meeting of students with their mentors a special event. Ask students to dress in businesslike clothes or, if that is not possible, ask them to dress nicely. Tell them that they are about to meet someone who may become their best friend, someone who may have a strong and positive impact on their life.

Arrange for a large meeting area such as the school library and invite school administrators to join you for this initial meeting. Send invitations to mentors to attend and stress the importance of being present for this first meeting.

If you learn that a particular mentor will not be able to attend the meeting because of a scheduling conflict, be sure to let that mentor's student know before the meeting, and, if possible, ask another mentor to talk to that student along with his or her student that day. That way, no student will be left sitting without a mentor.

At the first meeting, ask the mentors to sit on one side of the room and the students to sit on the other side. Provide name tags for students and mentors. Begin the meeting by making a few opening remarks about the importance of mentors and how they can make a real difference for students. Be sure to thank the mentors for participating in the program. You should also mention that you have given a great deal of thought to pairing mentors and students and that you hope all of these pairs will work out well. If there are any problems, both mentors and students should feel free to let you know so that you can try to correct the problems or pair students with different mentors. Stress that a successful mentoring program depends on clear and open communication. Mentoring pairs should not try to live with any problems that arise, but should feel free to bring them to your attention.

Then introduce each mentor, mentioning his or her name and career or place of employment, and introduce his or her student. As you introduce each pair, ask them to come forward, meet one another, and then take seats together until all of the mentors and students are introduced. When they come forward, give the mentor the page with information on his or her student. Ask the mentor to give his or her student a business card or a telephone number the student can use to contact the mentor. Once all students and mentors are introduced, ask them to become acquainted and talk about what they would like to do during the next semester or school year.

While they are getting acquainted, walk around and see if there are any questions the students or mentors would like you to answer.

Stress that a successful mentoring program depends on clear and open communication.

Monitoring your mentoring program. Once your mentoring program has been launched, you will want to monitor it regularly to ensure everything is going well and that you are aware of how the mentoring relationships are developing. The following tips and suggestions may help smooth the transition from planning to monitoring the mentoring program:

First of all, be sure to comply with your school's regulations regarding field trips. If mentors take students off campus during school hours, you will probably need to have signed parental permission forms. Be sure you understand your school's regulations regarding any activities mentors might arrange for students after school hours.

A sample parental permission form for the student to participate in the mentoring program is included at the end of the chapter on page 93. Before creating your own permission form, determine what requirements your district has for such a blanket permission form. This form is only for participating in the program after school hours and on weekends. If a student participates in any activities with his or her mentor during school hours, a separate permission form must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to you before the student leaves the campus.

One way to monitor the program is to have your students write one-paragraph reports on what contact they have had with their mentors. You can obtain similar feedback by calling mentors every few weeks. You may also want to meet with your mentors several weeks after the program begins so you can compare notes on what is and is not working with their students. Mentors often get good ideas or suggestions from one another, and they generally appreciate the opportunity to share and learn from one another's experiences.

Mentors generally do really wonderful things with students, such as take them to cultural events and help them get jobs. You might want to have students write about their experiences with their mentors in a Mentor News column in your program newsletter. Encourage students to think of ways to thank their mentors through thank-you letters or notes and perhaps holiday cards.

While it is likely that 90% of what you find as you monitor the program will be positive and wonderful, monitoring the program will also help you detect and prevent any potential problems.

Pairing students with mentors is not an exact science. Even with the most complete information and the best of intentions on both sides, some of your matches may not work out for one reason or another. When this happens, the best thing to do is to pair the student with a new mentor and pair the mentor with a new student. Both students and mentors should be reassured that they should contact you for help if there are any problems so you can help them resolve the problems or find them a more suitable match.

Beyond Mentoring

You may want to expand your mentoring program to include opportunities for your students to work as interns or apprentices in the ultimate learning frontier—the 21st century workplace. Students will benefit greatly from lessons that are best learned by spending time on the job.

- Your students may learn how to work with the "system." It is precisely the kind of organized system that exists in a department, work team, and workplace that poses problems for at-risk students. Many of these youth come from homes where there is little or no sense of order. Once students become familiar with the order in a workplace, they can begin to learn how to work within the system.

- Your students may learn the value of networking. Students can realize that building relationships with others on and off the job can lead to job opportunities in the future. If your mentors are actively involved in helping your students find jobs, your students will see networking in action and directly benefit from it.
- Your students may realize that training and versatility can open doors. By seeing how co-workers do a variety of tasks as members of a team or a department, students can realize that they will have more job opportunities when they become more versatile by learning more skills and pursuing further training or education.
- Your students may also realize the satisfaction from doing good work and being valued members in the workplace. Although students may learn some painful lessons as they make the transition to the workplace, many of the lessons they learn will be positive and empowering. Hearing a supervisor say "Good job!" and "You're really making a difference" can be a tremendous boost to a student's self-esteem.

If you have implemented a mentoring program, your first steps toward initiating an intern or apprentice program have already been taken. By connecting your classroom to the world of work through your mentors, you have established a built-in network of employers who are committed to your students and your program. The following suggestions may help you extend your mentoring program to include the ultimate learning frontier for your students as interns and apprentices in the workplace.

- Check with your district to see if they have already established a program with employers in your area who are interested in working with teachers to better prepare students to succeed in the 21st century workplace. If so, let your administrators know that you are interested in participating in such a program.

Taste of Workplace Reality

My efforts to launch students into the ultimate learning frontier have led to many job opportunities for them. These brief jobs have been excellent, though sometimes painful, learning experiences:

Jim obtained a position processing claims for a large HMO. Everything was going well until his supervisor gave him a verbal warning over a disagreement they had. Jim interpreted the warning as a sign that the supervisor did not like him and developed an attitude problem. When I asked Jim about his attitude, he said his boss hated him. That seemed to be a reasonable excuse for his poor attitude. We spoke at length about why his response was unacceptable.

Tanya did an excellent job working as a summer intern at a large medical center. The only complaint from her employer was that Tanya refused to take breaks. While her dedication was admirable, she did not realize that employers must pay extra when hourly employees work through lunch. Although this was not the case in the summer intern program, Tanya needed to learn about the "system" in the workplace regarding employee hours.

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- Ask if your school district is interested in hiring some of your students as interns. Some districts have extensive internship programs.
- Ask your mentors to arrange a meeting between you and the human resources managers or personnel directors of their companies so you can discuss the possibility of establishing internships or apprenticeships for your students. Also ask that the meeting include a representative from the company or organization's department or office that handles community outreach or community partnerships. At the meetings, be sure to share student success stories, statistics documenting your program's success, and/or a videotape of your program so employers can appreciate the successful and educationally sound nature of your program. Refer to your students as the employer's future employees, and stress that you would like to work with employers to learn of their expectations and requirements for their prospective employees so that you can better prepare your students for employment. Employers will appreciate this and will more than likely be willing to work with you.
- Contact local agencies and municipal departments such as law enforcement agencies, public libraries, or city or county offices, and arrange to meet with their human resources or personnel directors to explore the possibility of organizing an internship program with them.
- Contact your local Chamber of Commerce to see if that organization or any area employers have announced an intent to work with schools to establish internships or apprenticeships for students.
- Check with trade organizations (e.g., electricians, plumbers) to find out about the possibility of apprenticeships for your students in those career areas.

Mentoring Success Stories

The success of your mentoring program will be demonstrated in the changing lives of your students. Such change can be dramatic, as illustrated in the following success stories from my mentoring program.

Alex is a bright Hispanic young man who dreams of becoming an aircraft pilot. His mentor was a jet fighter pilot in the Air National Guard. He and Alex became real buddies. In fact, Alex often referred to his mentor as "my brother." Not only did Alex have opportunities to shadow his mentor on the job, he also had the opportunity to fly in the F-16 flight simulator several times, to fly a Cessna 172 in the Wright Flight program, and to tour the flight line at a nearby Air Force base.

In his senior year, his mentor helped Alex find a job with Morris Air, a company based at the local airport. Although Alex's position was cut when the airline was purchased, he found another position at the airport and was awarded a scholarship to attend the community college.

Annie was a shy Native American girl who was paired by coincidence with a mentor who worked for the United States Border Patrol. The day the students and mentors were introduced, both Annie's intended mentor and the student of another mentor did not show up. As a result, I decided to pair Annie and the other mentor. It turned out to be a perfect match! Annie's new mentor worked with Native American tribes and was well versed in their customs, cultures, and languages. The two became very close, attending powwows and working on a beaded ceremonial dress together. They also attended events at the college and worked on applications for college and other projects together. And on the day Annie began crying in class because her grandmother had died the day before, her mentor immediately left work and came to school to comfort her.

It was amazing how much of a positive influence the mentor had on Annie. Before long, Annie was working with the school district's central office to arrange for a tutor for Native American students at our school. Through the mentoring program, this shy girl became a much more confident young woman. Annie is now completing a certificate as a medical secretary at a technical school.

Annie's new mentor worked with Native American tribes and was well versed in their customs, cultures, and languages.

Sherry was one of our homeless teens in the Youth on Their Own program. She was just barely passing her courses when she was paired with a fantastic mentor, Linda, an African-American woman who had turned her own life around with the help of a mentor.

Sherry's life changed completely when Linda entered it. Linda helped her find a better place to live, gave her clothing, took her to many stimulating events on the college campus, and often took her out for meals. Sherry and Linda became the best of friends. There is no question that Sherry would probably not have survived without Linda's help and support.

Gary was a shy African-American boy who listened intently as one of our guest speakers, a highly successful African-American businessman, spoke of being physically abused as a child and told the students how he had used a positive attitude and hard work to rise above the abuse and become successful. The next day, I asked the students to write thank-you letters to our guest speaker. When I noticed that the screen on Gary's computer monitor was black, I asked him to adjust the brightness so he wouldn't hurt his eyes trying to read his writing. He explained that what he was writing was very personal, and he did not want other students to see it.

When I learned that Gary had also been abused as a child and was now living with his grandmother, I immediately asked our guest speaker to be Gary's mentor. He was delighted to do so. Suddenly, Gary learned that he had nothing to be ashamed of. The two went to basketball games and went fishing together, and Gary and his grandmother joined his mentor and his family for Thanksgiving dinner. Whenever Gary's grades took a dip, one call from his mentor was all it took to send them on an upward trend.

Today **Jeff** is working two jobs and attending the local community college with a scholarship. He has been interviewed on television and has addressed groups of teachers and civic organizations. Yet only 2 years ago, Jeff was taking drugs and had been arrested on a felony charge. A teen father, Jeff was failing in school and heading for disaster when he was paired with an incredibly giving mentor who had once had his life turned around by a mentor and wanted to give something back.

As Jeff's mentor, Mike taught Jeff how to use a laptop computer and then showed real trust by lending Jeff his laptop so that he could catch up on his homework. When he learned that Jeff had problems getting to school on time, Mike provided him with a 10-speed bike and bike helmet. He also spent a great deal of time talking with Jeff as a friend and role model. Mike's belief that Jeff was incredibly bright and talented really boosted Jeff's self-esteem and gave him the confidence to help several students learn how to read. Before meeting Mike, Jeff would not even speak in front of the class. During a recent Celebrate Literacy evening, however, Mike and Jeff gave mentor/student speeches in front of 300 people and electrified the audience.

The Incredible Mentor Network

Once you develop a group of dedicated, enthusiastic mentors who embrace mentoring as a way of helping students get their lives on track, you will have acquired a virtual army of support for your program in the community. Some of the support will come from the networking that occurs when mentors work together to meet their students' needs.

In my mentoring program, I instruct my students not to ask their mentors for jobs because I do not want them to be in an employer/employee relationship with their mentors. As a result, mentors will often network with other mentors to find jobs for their students. For example, another student's mentor, a hotel manager, hired Jeff to work in the hotel. Alex's mentor, the jet fighter pilot, gave Jeff's mentor the 10-speed bicycle for Jeff to ride to school. Jeff's mentor arranged for his employer, an HMO, to donate four computers to our program.

These are only a few examples of the kinds of networking that has occurred among our mentors for the benefit of our students and our program. Mentors have also participated in panel discussions at Corrections Education Conferences and on television newscasts and talk shows and have helped me move computer equipment to the court's administrative

Program Potential

Once you develop a group of dedicated mentors, you will have acquired a virtual army of support for your program in the community.

offices in Phoenix. They have spoken at the school's career day and have served as interviewers for the mock interviews I arrange each year for my seniors.

Organizing Your Mentoring Program

The rest of this chapter includes sample forms, applications, letters, and other materials you can use or adapt as needed as you organize and launch your mentoring program.

Mentoring resources. One helpful resource is *Mentors—Making a Difference in Our Public Schools* by Thomas Evans, chairman of the board of Teachers College, Columbia University, and founder of the National Symposium on Partnerships in Education and the MENTOR Law Program. The book was published in 1992 by Peterson Guides of Princeton, New Jersey. Additional information on mentoring may be obtained from the following organizations:

National Mentoring Partnership
1600 Duke Street, Suite 300
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 224-2200
www.mentoring.org

AutoZone, Inc.
Corporate Manager, Partners in Education
Department 8029
123 South Front Street
Memphis, TN 38103

National Association for Industry-Education
Cooperation
235 Hendricks Boulevard
Buffalo, NY 14266-3304
(716) 834-7047
www2.pcom.net/naiec/

National Association of Partners in Education, Inc.
901 North Pitt Street, Suite 320
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 836-4880
www.napehg.org

The Capital Task Force
Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom
4 Times Square
New York, NY 10036
(212) 735-3000
www.sasmf.com

Mentors Program—Student Application

Name______________________________ Date____________

Age_____ Grade_____ Sex_____ Ethnicity____________________

Career Goals ______________________________________

Interests (e.g., art, music, sports, etc.)______________________

____

First language__________________ Telephone__________________

School Counselor__________________ Current G.P.A. ____________

What types of things would you like to do with your mentor?

__ career shadowing
__ cultural events
__ college applications
__ just talk
__ sport events
__ college campus tours
__ financial aid forms
__ job applications
__ educational events
__ help with class work
__ job interviews

Other: ____

____

Current Class Schedule

	Subject	*Teacher*
Period 1		
Period 2		
Period 3		
Period 4		
Period 5		
Period 6		

Do not write below this line. To be completed by the 21st Century Workplace teacher.

Mentor______________________ Telephone__________________

E-mail______________ Career field__________________________

Mailing address ____

Employer____

Address____

Permission Form for Mentoring Program

Your son/daughter is interested in participating in our Mentoring Program. In this program, adult role models from the community help our students achieve their career goals. They can also provide opportunities for the students to shadow someone on the job who works in a career of interest to them or to attend cultural, educational, or sporting events. In addition, mentors can help students complete college applications and financial aid forms, prepare for job interviews, complete job applications, and tour the campus of the community college or university. They may monitor students' progress, attendance, and conduct in school and help students improve in these areas. At times, they may simply talk with students and let them know that they care about their futures.

If it is necessary for a student to leave campus with a mentor during school hours, the student will be required to obtain a signed parent permission form. However, because most of the student/mentor meetings or activities will take place after school hours or on weekends, it is necessary that you acknowledge this and give your permission for your son/daughter to participate in the Mentoring Program by signing the form below and returning it to school. Thank you.

- -

______________________________ has my permission to participate in the
Student Name

Mentoring Program at ______________________________ during this school year.
School Name

____
Signature of Parent or Guardian Date

Letter Inviting Employers to Participate in the Mentoring Program

Dear ____________________________:

We invite you to join us in an exciting venture that is actually an investment in our youth and in our community's future. Our Mentoring Program offers you and your staff the opportunity to work one-on-one with a high school junior or senior in need of special help, providing that student with a successful adult role model and guiding that student onto a career path to success beyond high school.

A large percentage of our students are at risk. Over 70% of our students are on free and reduced-cost lunches, and more than 200 of our students are living on their own. In addition, nearly half of our student population is comprised of minorities. Many of these teens have an unrealistic perception of the real world of work. The time they spend with mentors who are career professionals may be the most important part of their educational experiences.

As a professional in the community, you are no doubt aware that the task of preparing high school students for the 21st century workplace is a complex one. The United States Department of Labor SCANS Report (*Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills for the 21st Century Worker*) outlines those complex skills and competencies that employers like you expect from employees. We know that you also value a positive attitude and other personal characteristics from your employees. We would like to ensure that our graduates are equipped with these skills, competencies, and attitudes to help them succeed in the workplace or in higher education. We hope that you will join us as we work toward achieving this goal.

Please encourage your employees to consider becoming mentors and making a difference in our students' lives. I have enclosed several mentor applications for interested employees at your business, agency, or organization to complete. Please return the completed forms to us by __________[date]. We will then match students who have been recommended for the program with mentors who have volunteered. In _______[month], we will hold a special event to introduce students and mentors to each other and to highlight those companies and organizations that are working with us on this important program.

We are looking forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your interest in our youth and in our community's future.

Sincerely,

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Application to Serve as a Mentor

Your participation in our Mentoring Program and your investment in our students are very much appreciated. It is our expectation that some of your attention will be devoted to skills, practices, and attitudes necessary for success in the workplace. It is also our hope that career shadowing will be a part of this program.

Name ____
Mailing address ______________________________________
____
Telephone______________ E-mail address__________________________
Sex M__ F__ Career Field______________________________
Interests (e.g., music, sports) ___________________________
____
First language____________________ Second language____________________

If you are willing to specify your ethnicity to allow us to match you with a student of the same ethnic background, please check one:

__ Caucasian
__ Mexican American
__ African American
__ Native American
__ Asian American
__ Other
__ Hispanic

Employer____
Address____
____

On a separate piece of paper, please write two or three paragraphs explaining why you would like to mentor a student and what you would like to get out of the Mentoring Program. Thank you very much.

____
(Signature) (Date)

To be completed by the employer participating in mentoring program:

Name of Employer:______________________________________

____
(Employee's name)

is employed by our company and is recommended to participate in the ________________ (High School) Mentoring Program as a mentor.

____
(Signature) (Date)

Mentor Information Sheet

Thank you for agreeing to mentor one of our students. The student you will be mentoring is ______________________________.

His/her telephone number is ______________________________.

Some of the suggested activities that may be beneficial to the student you are mentoring are listed below.

- Tour the campus of the local community college or university.
- Allow the student to shadow you on the job for a morning or an afternoon.
- Help the student complete applications for college, financial aid forms, or any other kind of application (driver's license, bank account, auto loan, insurance).
- Help the student through the process of applying to the community college or university. (The paperwork and bureaucracy involved in applying can be very intimidating to students.)
- Help the student complete an employment application and prepare him or her for the job interview.
- Talk with the student about issues that are important to him or her.
- Study with the student for standardized tests, such as the SAT, the ACT, or the Test of Fluency of the English Language (TOFEL).
- Study with the student for tests in his or her classes.
- Take the student out for meals.

Please remind the student that he or she may not leave the school campus without a field trip permission form signed by a parent or guardian. The student will also have to make up any work missed during his or her absence from classes. If you plan to take the student off campus during school hours, please call me at least four days in advance to arrange for the absence. My telephone number is ______________________________.

Tips for Mentors

Arrange with your student to have them telephone you twice a week. Give the student your phone number and the best times of the day to call.

If possible, introduce yourself to your student's parents or guardians before you go anywhere with the student outside of school.

Try not to take the student out of school during the school day. Instead, meet with him or her after school or on weekends and holidays.

Document your contacts with your student in a log or a journal. Include notes about anything you did that you felt was successful as well as what did not work out well for you and the student.

Communicate with your student on a regular basis and congratulate him or her for special achievements. You might consider

- sending a birthday card or gift,
- sending e-mail to our classroom, and
- sending faxes to our classroom (students really love this).

Thank you very much for your interest and investment in our students.
You are making a real difference in their lives.

(Add the address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of your classroom here.)

Chapter 5
Notes on Planning the Mentoring Program

Which Students Will Participate in the Mentoring Program?
(all students? seniors? freshmen? only those who are interested?)

Recruiting Mentors

Local Businesses and Corporations

Agencies of the Department of Justice

Community Service Organizations

Hospitals and Health Maintenance Organizations

Fire Department

Police or Other Law Enforcement Agencies

Retired Persons' Associations

Selecting Mentors

Matching Students With Mentors

Launching the Mentoring Program

Mentor Orientation and Training

Introducing Students and Mentors

Monitoring the Mentoring Program

Beyond Mentoring

Organizing the Mentoring Program

Important Names and Phone Numbers of Mentor Site Coordinators

Name	Telephone Number	Employer/Organization

Important Dates to Remember

Things to Do

Other Ideas

Chapter 6

Literacy Classes for Adults

According to a 1993 United States Department of Education study, almost half of the 191 million adults in the United States do not have the literacy skills necessary to write a business letter, complete a job application, or read and comprehend a newspaper. Although these people can read, they cannot read well enough to perform basic tasks involving reading. The study concludes that these people are functionally illiterate. Consider the following national statistics on illiteracy:

- 75% of the unemployed are nonreaders.
- One out of three mothers in the American Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program cannot read.
- 40% of illiterates in the United States are between the ages of 20 and 39.
- An additional 2.3 million people are added to the number of illiterate Americans each year.
- 65% of prisoners cannot read.
- 85% of juvenile offenders are functionally illiterate.

In the past, lack of an education doomed one to a life of hard labor. Because of the changing nature of work in the 21st century, people who are uneducated and illiterate may not be able to find jobs, even those involving hard labor. This is one of the key factors behind the rapidly growing number of families in the United States that are living at or below the poverty level.

Research has indicated that the strongest determining factor in a child's literacy level is the mother's literacy level. Conversely, those students in your program who have a low literacy level may have parents who have poor literacy skills. Thus, one of the most beneficial things you can do for your students is to offer literacy courses that their parents and other adults can attend one or two evenings per week. These classes may be offered through a partnership with the local community college or the adult basic education program in your community.

Reaching Adults

Adult Learners

Adults who are returning to the classroom after years away often feel intimidated or even terrified at the thought of being in a class again. Many will tell you they have not been in school in more than 20 years, and, at first, they will have a great deal of anxiety about the class. Schools can be threatening places for adults who have unpleasant memories of their own school experiences.

In addition, many adult students will have had no experience with computers. For these adults, the thought of attending a class in which they use a computer to learn can be very frightening. While teenagers [illegible] generally not intimidated by technology, many adults are petrified at the thought of using computers.

You can help these adults come out of the illiteracy closet by lowering their anxiety levels, helping them renew their educational goals, and bringing their children into the class so they can work together.

Coming out of the illiteracy closet. Once you offer adult literacy classes, do not be surprised if your students' parents sign up and then fail to attend. This happens often with adults who are functionally illiterate. Most people would rather admit to just about anything than admit that they cannot read. Once your classes have been offered for several terms, however, those adults who have taken the classes will encourage other adults to sign up. Many of my adult students have referred spouses, relatives, friends, and co-workers to our classes. Parents who fail to attend one class may enroll in and attend another.

Lowering their anxiety levels. Reconfiguring the classroom into an office setting generally lowers an adult's level of anxiety and also helps eradicate the stigma of a literacy program. Once they learn to use a computer, they will feel a great sense of pride and accomplishment. In fact, my adult students often refer to this as their "computer class." You will find that once they are comfortable with their role in class, adults can become very excited about learning and going to college. They work hard to learn and, in general, appreciate everything you do for them.

It is extremely important to congratulate adults for returning to school and to encourage them to become lifelong learners. Also, it is very important to give adult students many opportunities to experience success. Many of them have not had this type of opportunity for years and see themselves as failures who cannot change their lives. Improving their own self-esteem through success in the classroom will enable them to help their sons and daughters develop self-esteem and self-confidence. Returning to school as an adult and a parent often helps them value education.

Renewing educational goals. Taking an adult literacy class can be a parent's first step toward renewing his or her educational goals. In addition to improving their reading and writing skills, these classes can introduce parents to the community college, if it sponsors classes, and give them the opportunity to continue their education on its campus.

Program Potential

Taking one of your classes can be a parent's first step toward renewing his or her educational goals.

Parents can also meet with career counselors at the community college and plan their way to better jobs or careers. Some parents have made career changes as a result of these classes. Some have earned the nine college credits for the three courses we offer and have then returned the following semester to help other adults, boosting their own self-esteem in the process.

Working together. Encourage your students to attend the adult classes and help their parents and other adults with the computers and programs. Families become closer when parents and their children work together. This is also an effective way to help your students feel more positive about themselves, their families, and their education.

These courses also help parents improve their employability by improving their literacy and job skills. The self-confidence of the parents increases when they see their own skills improve, and that increase in self-esteem makes it easier for parents to encourage their children to develop and pursue educational goals.

Bob's Story

During the first semester we offered evening classes for adults, a man in his mid-40s was referred to us through a counselor. Bob was a pleasant fellow who kept to himself. When I distributed a reading pretest, he told me that he did not want to take it and that he could not do tests. He refused to work on the reading software program with a partner and preferred to work alone. He walked with a cane, and everyone assumed that he had a physical disability of some sort.

As the weeks went by and the class became a small, close-knit group, Bob began to come out of his shell and become part of the class. He started working with a partner and did well. One evening, he walked into class without a limp and without his cane. When I asked him where his cane was, he answered, "I don't need it any more. I can read now!"

Teaching Adults

The Adult Curriculum

The curriculum of your adult classes will depend on which organization or agency sponsors the classes. Our adult courses are offered under the auspices of the local community college and must meet state-approved course descriptions and guidelines. If the courses were offered through the county adult basic education program, then those guidelines would have to be met. You might also offer your courses through your own school district if your district has a program of evening courses for adults.

Nearly all of the English for 21st Century Employment curriculum guidelines in Part II would be an appropriate foundation for an adult literacy course. It is unlikely, however, that adults would attend literacy classes for the six semesters they would need to complete the curriculum. Thus, you may want to follow the first two semesters of the curriculum outline and incorporate the simpler job skill portions of the remaining four semesters. You may also want to include the section on goal setting because your adult students would benefit from learning to set goals on a regular basis.

A Success Story in Writing

The ability to write clearly and effectively can have a powerful effect on one's self-esteem and self-confidence. The following essays were written by one of my adult students. He wrote the first essay on the first evening of his first class. The second essay was written 1 year later after completing one semester of reading and one semester of writing in our adult evening classes.

Although the improvement in his writing skills is evident, what may not be as evident is the change in his self-confidence. After completing these two courses, he worked for a year as a volunteer in our adult classes and was a powerful inspiration and role model for the other students. His improvement in writing skills was so significant that he received a special award of recognition at our Celebrate Literacy evening and was presented with a computer donated by a local business. He is now working on a degree in counseling.

Teaching Tip

If you plan to offer adult education classes, look for the 📖 icon shown here throughout the curriculum section that follows. This icon indicates the parts of the curriculum that are appropriate for adult literacy classes. The segments that are appropriate for adults but may be too difficult for adult literacy courses are simply marked "appropriate for adults."

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First Writing Sample

(Essay written on first evening of reading class)

Hi I'm very nurvous but I will try to do the best I can with this. Poor readers run in my family. No one in my family reads for the fun of it. My brothers and I only read if it's manditory, like job relaited items. i want to break that chain so my kids have a better chance at there futures.

One of the main reasons I want to take this coures is, to assist myself later and use this coures as a steping stone in other classes. Later in "life" I waill have to brouden my knolege in order to ern more in the carer field. With the job related experience I have the only carer option I find open to me is law enforcement and I'm not sure that is what I want to do.

Second Writing Sample

(Essay written after one semester of reading and one semester of writing classes)

What I want from this class

I am taking writing 100 to assist me in my college level writing. I am entering into college to obtain a degree in social services. I also desire to posses better writing skills to assist me at work. Finally, I feel that having good writing skills can have personal benifits too.

I have recently made the decision to learn about Social Services. After a long process of career exploration, I have found Social Services to be the best career decision for me. In this field it is required to do a lot of paper work. It is also necessary to be able to communicate effectively through writing. This writing class will assist me in succeeding with my future in Social Services.

As a security officer, I write many reports at work. I often write injury, accident and theft reports. The way I write a report can determine the outcome of an investigation or even a law suit. All of my reports are subject to be called into court as evidence if needed. It is necessary to write well at my place of work, because I could be the deciding factor in a major law suit that could cost the company a lot of money.

Finally, the use of proper writing skills can have many personal benefits. I was mad at one of the managers at work. This manager (who has nothing to do with my job) yelled at me about doing something for a guest in an area, that she said, I was not suppose to be in. I would not have minded, but she did this in front of my Co-workers. To save face, I told everybody I would show her. I wrote a letter to the General Manager and expressed my concerns. In the letter I used many writing techniques, to include quotes from the General Manager himself. Consequently, the manager was reprimanded.

My reasons for taking writing 100 are vast. I can improve myself in many ways. The future career I have chosen will be improved. I will do better at my currant job. I will also be a better person in general. This course is going to improve my entire life. That is why I am taking it.

Chapter 6
Notes on Offering Literacy Classes for Adults

Adult Learners

Coming Out of the Illiteracy Closet

Lowering Their Anxiety Levels

Renewing Educational Goals

Working Together

The Adult Curriculum

Things to Do

Other Ideas

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Classroom reform is not a simple or quick fix. Effectively helping high school students develop the skills and competencies they will need in higher education and in the workplace requires a collaborative effort from the school, the business sector, the community, the community college or adult education program, parents, and mentors. This effort will be even more effective if it includes the juvenile justice system and the courts.

Collaborative effort is only one part of the equation yielding effective school reform. The equation must also include an excellent teacher who applies the principles of effective education and is fiercely committed to making the program work for his or her students.

Clearly, coordinating and initiating a collaborative effort of such magnitude, implementing technology in the classroom, and adopting a new role as manager/facilitator are not small tasks. As an architect of the classroom of the future, you face an exciting opportunity to make a powerful, positive impact not only on your students but on America in general. Educators who resist reform will miss out on one of the most rewarding and exciting experiences of their careers. I applaud you for your commitment to reform and for your willingness to transform your classroom into a professional office setting and prepare your students for 21st century employment.

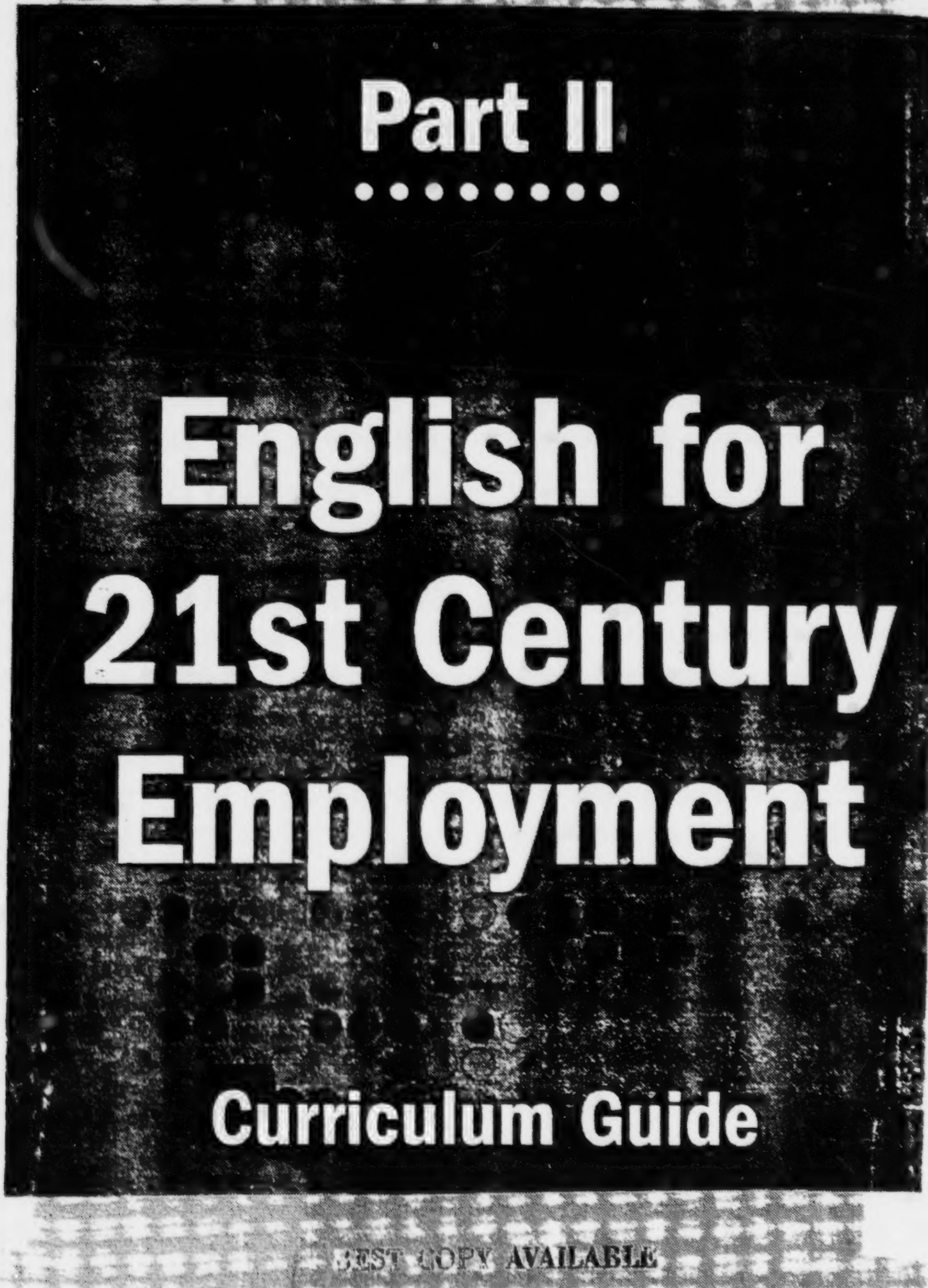
When you implement this program, you will be doing more than simply helping your students develop the skills they need to gain and maintain jobs that pay more than the minimum wage. You will also be ensuring that they are prepared to compete with the best workforces in the world. You may also be helping them break the cycle of poverty and even avoid a life of crime. It is no coincidence that over 80% of the juveniles incarcerated in this country are functionally illiterate.

It is no coincidence that over 80% of the juveniles incarcerated in this country are functionally illiterate.

Although your students and society in general will benefit greatly from your program, you will also enjoy many benefits. You will be able to spend your time in the classroom teaching and interacting one-on-one with your students. Discipline problems should be rare. You will be able to put students in touch with many exciting resources through technology and your network of community resources and partnerships. And you can see your students' hope for their futures grow as they see the relevance of today's classwork to their future careers.

Once your program has been implemented and you have become accustomed to the new roles for students and teachers in this innovative learning environment, you will find that you enter your classroom each morning with a sense of excitement and anticipation. While many teachers have to wait years to see dramatic changes in their students, you will see your students greatly improve their literacy skills in a semester or a year.

The National Educational Service offers a 3-day teacher-training seminar led by the author of this book and other presenters to help prepare you for creating and implementing your own program and to provide you with resources and tools to help you restructure your classroom. Please contact the National Educational Service at 1-800-733-6786 for further information. Teachers who attend these seminars are invited to become part of a network of educators who have implemented similar programs throughout the United States and share ideas, support, and information on resources. I wish you much success with your program, and hope you will find this teaching experience in your 21st century classroom as rewarding as I have.



Part II

••••••••

English for 21st Century Employment

Curriculum Guide

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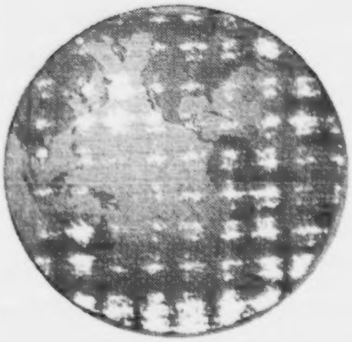


Introduction

No one curriculum can meet the needs of every teacher and every student. The following English for 21st Century Employment curriculum outline has worked very well for me and my students. It is provided as a template that you can adapt freely. It is vital that this be *your* program and that you and your students take ownership of the program. You will also have state mandates or site or district requirements that should be included within your curriculum.

This curriculum is intended to be largely self-paced and to be taught using strategies and instructional materials designed to accommodate the varying learning styles of today's highly diverse student population. Because of its self-paced nature, the curriculum can easily be changed and rearranged; the presentation in this guide—six separate chapters—makes it even easier to quickly familiarize yourself with the content and then adapt it as needed. Although the curriculum is designed as a six-semester program, some students will take seven or eight semesters to complete it. Thus, it represents a 3- to 4-year program. The goal is for students to progress through the continuum of skills and materials from the most basic to the most difficult and complex and to achieve to their maximum potentials.

Also, please note that while the curriculum outline that follows is designed for an English class, Appendix A contains adaptations for other disciplines—social studies, science, and mathematics.

Look for Identifying Icons

The following icons have been used throughout the curriculum to identify those activities that require computer use or are appropriate for adult literacy students:

🖥 Computer use is strongly suggested for this activity.

📖 Appropriate for adult literacy students.

Curriculum Overview

English for 21st Century Employment is designed as a 3-year program. During the first four semesters, students become self-directed learners responsible for improving their own skills as they progress through increasingly difficult levels of work. During these semesters, they are also asked to teach other students how to use the computer programs. Thus, even though they work independently on their own projects, they also develop interpersonal skills by helping others. During the fifth and sixth semesters, students also participate in cooperative learning activities, further developing their interpersonal skills and learning how to become members of a team.

Developing SCANS skills. The curriculum is designed to develop many of the skills listed in the SCANS report. These are skills employers will require of the 21st century worker. Each section and activity in the curriculum indicates which SCANS skills it incorporates. See pages xix–xx for a complete listing of the SCANS skills and competencies.

Semester at a glance. Each semester is discussed in a separate chapter to help you quickly find your way through the curriculum outline. For an overview of each semester, see the Semester at a Glance section that begins each chapter. An overview of the entire curriculum outline is provided on the following page.

Self-paced program. The curriculum is designed to allow each student to begin at his or her skill level and learn at his or her own pace. This is accomplished through teacher-aided software instruction to improve reading and writing skills. Each student's individualized program challenges him or her to develop vocabulary, reading and writing skills, higher-level thinking skills, research skills, and job skills. Students will also learn how to set goals and will spend time exploring careers of interest. Self-paced work continues in the last two semesters of the curriculum, but students also learn to work as members of teams through cooperative learning activities.

English for 21st Century Employment
Curriculum Outline Overview

The following chart provides a brief overview of the six semesters in the English for 21st Century Employment curriculum outline. Please note that many activities and components continue from one semester to the next.

Semester 1

- Introduce students to the program and their restructured classroom.
- Begin instruction with keyboarding software program.
- Begin instruction with reading skills software program.
- Begin instruction with reading comprehension software programs.
- Administer reading pretests.

Semester 2

- Continue instruction with reading comprehension software programs.
- Introduce goal setting and require weekly goal sheets.
- Have students write a weekly essay following the steps in the writing process and using a word-processing program.
- Assign first book report for the year.
- Introduce the journalism components of the curriculum.
- Have students write news, sports, and feature stories, and editorials.

Semester 3

- Continue reading comprehension software.
- Continue weekly goal setting.
- Continue with book reports.
- Continue journalism component.
- Continue weekly essay writing.
- Assign several or all of the following types of essays: descriptive, process, and comparison and contrast.
- Incorporate vocabulary development into reading software programs and newspaper reading activity.
- Have students practice silent, sustained reading.
- Prepare for standards-based graduation testing.

Semester 4

- Continue weekly goal setting.
- Introduce writing to enter the world of work; write resumes and cover letters.
- Begin literature component.
- Continue book reports.
- Assign student book publishers project.
- Have students read *Romeo and Juliet* and *West Side Story.*
- Discuss poetry and figures of speech.
- Have students practice silent, sustained reading.

Semester 5

- Continue weekly goal setting.
- Continue literature component.
- Introduce creative writing project and contest.
- Assign an opinion essay.
- Begin cooperative learning writing projects.
- Begin department projects.
- Introduce "Newspaper of the Future" project and contest.
- Introduce self-assessment report.
- Introduce writing for the workplace.
- Introduce career research and preparation activities.
- Begin employability skills portfolios.

Semester 6

- Continue weekly goal setting.
- Continue weekly essay writing.
- Hold mock job interviews.
- Introduce research project.
- Introduce "The Internet and You" assignment.
- Begin using software with research projects from the real world.
- Introduce critical thinking activities.
- Begin preparation for life after graduation.

Semester at a Glance

- Introduce students to the program and their restructured classroom.
- Begin instruction with keyboarding software program.
- Begin instruction with reading skills software program.
- Begin instruction with reading comprehension software programs.
- Administer reading pretests.

Getting Started

> *Students should see themselves as new employees, and the first week of class should be viewed as new-employee orientation.*

New Student-Employee Orientation

You will want to introduce students to the program as soon as class begins. During the first week of class, it is important to establish an office climate in the room and to give students a clear understanding of how they will be graded and how they should conduct themselves in this new learning environment. Students should see themselves as new employees, and the first week of class should be viewed as new-employee orientation. Chapter 2 of this guide discusses strategies for teaching today's learner and provides many ways of presenting your students with their new role. The following are just a few of the key points you will want to discuss:

The workplace environment. When you begin the new student-employee orientation, briefly discuss the program, explaining why the classroom has been organized as a professional office and why they will be expected to perform as though they were professional office workers. Also discuss the care of the equipment, furniture, and carpeting in the room. Stress that the goal of this environment is to help them succeed in higher education and in the workplace of the 21st century.

Your expectations. From the very first day, require students to behave professionally while in class. Spend some time telling them about some of the software programs they will be using throughout the 3-year curriculum and demonstrate some of these programs.

Their new role. Explain their new role as professional office workers and yours as a manager/facilitator, and discuss how their new role will change the way they learn. For example, they are to enter the room when they arrive, and not wait in the hall for the bell to ring. At the end of the period, they are not to line up at the door in anticipation of the bell ringing. They are to respect their co-workers.

How they will benefit. Stress the many benefits students will receive through this program. They will have the opportunity to research and explore career options and may have the chance to shadow someone on the job in a career of interest to them. Describe some of the exciting projects they will complete later in the program, such as creating their own magazines, compiling employability skills portfolios, or writing and publishing the newspaper of the future.

Help them realize that although the work in this class may involve basic skills at first, the work will become increasingly more complex as the program progresses.

The Student Behavior Contract. Part of the new-employee orientation should be a discussion of the Student Behavior Contract. One way to introduce this topic is to mention that many employees have an employee manual that employees must read. Employees must then sign a form agreeing to abide by the regulations in the manual. Students should consider the Student Behavior Contract for this class to be their version of an employee manual.

Students should consider the Student Behavior Contract for this class to be their version of an employee manual.

Take a few minutes to discuss each of the items on the contract, stressing the benefits to be gained when student-employees follow the rules. Mention that the signed contract makes the student's involvement in the program official and businesslike, which contributes to the workplace environment you are striving to achieve.

Student Data Forms

During the first day of class, you may have each student complete a student data form for his or her confidential file folder. You may want to include blanks on your form for the student's sex, grade in school, ethnicity, probation or parole status, employment, grade point average, and current schedule of classes. You may also want to leave a space for the student's career interest, the name of the student's mentor, and the mentor's telephone number and address.

Reading Pretests

Be sure to pretest the students' reading comprehension and reading levels in the first or second week of school. While entering the students' pretest and posttest reading scores into a database will take some time, it will help you determine whether your program is working to improve your students' reading skills. It will also provide you with convincing data you can use to promote your program in the community. Further information on pre- and posttesting is included in chapter 2.

Keyboarding Instruction

If they are not already familiar with the keyboard, students should learn keyboarding skills at the beginning of the program. One of the most effective tutorial typing programs available is *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing*, which you may want to include in your curriculum. As students use this program to become familiar with the keyboard and correct finger positions, the program displays their typing speed and accuracy and also explains which of the student's fingers need improvement in typing. The program includes several exercises that begin with simple keyboarding and progress to much more complicated typing activities.

Monitoring Student Progress

Because the students will be working through the program individually, be sure to record when each student completes the touch-typing or basic reading programs. A series of shorthand-type notations can be used to indicate the programs the student has completed or skills the student has mastered.

An effective way to facilitate monitoring student progress and to help students organize their work materials as well as their time is to provide them with portfolios with pockets or file folders that you keep in boxes, which are labeled by class periods. As students enter the room, they should go straight to the class box and get their portfolios and their disks (if you are requiring them to save their files on disk), and then proceed to their computers and begin working.

In these folders they will keep their essays, goal sheets, vocabulary lists, and other assignments and handouts. Also, they can print out their performance scores from the reading software programs, or you can do this using the teacher management system included in most reading software programs. It is very helpful to provide students with a weekly work schedule to follow in order to manage their time as they complete each week's assignments. A sample weekly work schedule is included on the following page.

Weekly Work Schedule

Monday

- Office meeting to discuss and work on prewriting for the week's essay assignment.
- Begin working on your essay for the week.
- Type your four goals for the week using your Weekly Goals Sheet format. List how you plan to accomplish these goals. Important: One goal must be to improve reading and writing skills; one must relate to a SCANS skill (21st century workplace skills); and one goal must be an academic skill. The fourth should be a personal goal that will help you grow and improve.

  Goal 1: ______________________________

  Goal 2: ______________________________

  Goal 3: ______________________________

  Goal 4: ______________________________

- Begin reviewing this week's vocabulary list for the quiz on Friday.

Tuesday and Wednesday

- For the first few minutes, practice silent, sustained reading (SSR). Use books to do the RAP (reading and paraphrasing) strategy.
- Continue to work on this week's essay. When you finish your rough draft, read it aloud softly to yourself so that you see and hear what you've written. Make corrections before passing in your paper.
- We will spend time working on preparing for the state-mandated graduation tests.
- Work on the PLATO Interactive Learning Courseware: *Basic Skills for the Real World, Beginning Reading for the Real World,* and *Job Skills for the Real World.* (seniors: *Projects for the Real World*).

Thursday

- Practice SSR using books for this month's book report, or using the books, newspapers, or magazines provided in the room.
- Complete the rough draft of your essay for the week. Before you turn it in, read it aloud softly and then make any corrections that are needed. If you've already turned it in for comments, it will be in your folder with corrections, and you should work on a final draft to pass in for a grade.
- Work on the PLATO Reading Courseware.

Friday

- Completed final drafts due for this week's essay.
- Completed Weekly Goals Sheet due. Don't forget to fill in the final column indicating whether you accomplished your goals this week.
- Work on the PLATO Reading Courseware.
- Vocabulary quiz. If you have any extra time, read your book for this month's book report.

Basic Reading Instruction

- Appropriate for students who read at or below the fifth-grade level.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, applying technology to task, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, interpersonal skills.

Because many students have poor literacy skills, reading instruction is essential in the first semester of the program. Whatever reading software program or method and materials you select, make sure they are designed to help students with varying learning styles, that they incorporate phonics and whole language, and that they respect the dignity of your students.

The reading materials you choose should allow the student to interact with the subject in as many of these ways as possible.

Accommodate different learning styles. Try to select basic reading materials that are student-centered and success-oriented and that present material in a variety of ways. Some people learn better by seeing or by hearing, while others may prefer to learn by touch or by being physically involved in an activity. In addition, some tend to be random or global learners, while others use a more analytical and organized approach to learning. The reading materials you choose should allow the student to interact with the subject in as many of these ways as possible.

Incorporate phonics and whole language. The most effective approach for my students has incorporated a combination of phonics and whole language. While it is important to understand sound/symbol relationships learned from phonics instruction, it is equally important to present this information in a meaningful context. For example, students whose first language is not English need to know how the English language sounds in order to correctly pronounce English words.

Respect the dignity of your students. Few reading software programs seem to be designed for high school and adult students. Many of the software programs advertised for adults or teens are actually juvenile in content, methodology, or both and are insulting to these age groups. Choose a program that is age-appropriate as well as skill-appropriate.

Beginning Reading for the Real World

Although it is designed for grades K–3, *Beginning Reading for the Real World*, published by PLATO Learning, Inc., can be used effectively with high school students whose reading levels are extremely low or with ESL students learning English. This is a comprehensive beginning reading program that uses word recognition, cloze activities, phonics games, and progressively challenging stories to help students build the foundation for reading success. In exciting thematic units in beginning reading, students become engaged as they explore the undersea world, discover a rain forest, or visit fanciful story lands where they make hundreds of letter-sound connections and develop their reading proficiency.

Reading Comprehension

When students have completed a basic reading program and are familiar with touch-typing on the computer keyboard, they can begin working on a reading comprehension program.

- Appropriate for students who read at or below the fifth-grade level.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, applying technology to task, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, interpersonal skills.

Software recommendations. There are many excellent reading comprehension programs available. I can personally recommend two programs that have worked very well for my students: *Basic Skills for the Real World* and *Job Skills for the Real World*. You may be familiar with other excellent programs or may need to use the program provided by your district. If you are free to find a program that suits you, consider contacting software publishers for free demonstration disks of their reading comprehension programs for high school and adult students.

Consider contacting software publishers for free demonstration disks of their reading comprehension programs for high school and adult students.

Basic Skills for the Real World and *Job Skills for the Real World* are multimedia programs designed for adult and alternative-education students at a beginning reading level. The programs give students the opportunity to learn a variety of skills as they help characters of varying ethnicities solve compelling problems.

Basic Skills for the Real World *is appealing to my students because the content encompasses issues they face in their own lives. In fact, two of my students were so engrossed in the program one day last semester that they didn't move when the bell rang. When I reminded them that it was lunchtime, they said, "But we can't go to lunch right now. KC is about to drop out of school, and we have to help him make the right decisions so he can stay in school." They worked on the program for 20 minutes into the lunch period.*

Basic Skills for the Real World. This program provides 80 hours of instruction that focus specifically on the job skills and competencies outlined in the U.S. Department of Labor's SCANS Report. The program uses an integrated curriculum and includes eight courses. Students learn reading, writing, mathematics, problem solving, and job skills in each course. Each course has approximately 20 learning activities, for a total of 159 learning activities. In each course, students follow the life story of a realistic character and learn skills in meaningful contexts. Skills include reading a job schedule, test-taking strategies, time management, making a budget, completing a job application, and solving an interpersonal problem. Students will see color photos of the characters and hear them speak. The courses include more than 70 hours of audio. Each of the eight units in this course has specific areas of focus. In the unit entitled "Duc and Linh," students help a Vietnamese couple who are new to the United States make inferences, use a telephone directory, make comparisons, ask for and follow directions, use a calculator, use coins and currency, use checks, study nutrition, use a map, and locate medical care.

Other units include "Grace Under Pressure," which focuses on self-assessment, personal budgets, using credit wisely, and other financial decisions, and "KC Makes Choices," which has students help a high school student face issues such as gangs, drugs, peer pressure, relationships, jobs, and self-esteem. All of the activities in these units ask students to solve problems, make predictions, answer questions, and write sentences or paragraphs. The program also includes student mentors to help students with answers and a resource center with more activities, games, resource books, maps, and articles students may use when they research their projects.

Job Skills for the Real World. Each unit of this program provides approximately 10 hours of instruction, focusing specifically on the job skills and competencies included in the SCANS skills. Activities challenge students to solve problems that they are likely to encounter in a job search and teach strategies that they can adapt and apply to fit any job-hunting situation. Each unit is taught within a meaningful, real-world context. The program includes hundreds of color photos and graphic images to boost comprehension of the materials and make the learning experience more enjoyable. The course is divided into three units: "Which Job for Me?" "Choosing the Right Job," and "The Job Hunt."

"Which Job for Me?" helps students explore their interests and career options. Students take a quiz on their working styles and then learn how their hobbies can lead to jobs. They read announcements, use charts, compare jobs, and learn about training programs.

"Choosing the Right Job" helps students explore their skills, assess the job market, and find a job. Students use their experiences to discover their skills and find out how understanding their personalities will help them choose the right job. They also learn about the hidden job market and how to conduct an information interview.

"The Job Hunt" shows students effective methods for landing a job that requires the skills they possess. This unit takes students through the process of completing job applications, writing a time-based (chronological) resume, and writing a skills-based (functional) resume. Students also learn how to write an effective cover letter and how to prepare to answer common interview questions with examples that demonstrate their qualities and skills.

Suggested Timeline for the First Week

GOALS

- To have students understand the program and accept responsibility for their own learning.
- To have students take ownership of the program.

STEPS

- Introduce the program and the innovative learning environment.
- Explain the program goals and your expectations.
- Discuss the emphasis on career exploration and skills. Stress that the district has invested a great amount in this program because it believes the students are worth it.
- Familiarize students with their new role as professional employees and your new role as a manager and facilitator.
- Discuss evaluation and grading policies. Stress that students need to take responsibility for their own progress, although you will help them when necessary.
- Discuss your expectation that students behave as professional office workers (discuss dress code, appropriate language, etc.).
- Discuss care of the equipment, furniture, disks, materials, and the room.
- Discuss and have students and parents sign student behavior contracts.
- Make a confidential data folder for each student and include the signed contract in the folder.
- Have students begin the keyboarding and basic reading programs on the first two days of class.
- Administer reading pretests to students on the third or fourth day of class. File these in their data folders.
- Create a separate set of student folders for worksheets from the software programs. File these folders where students can access them.

Suggestions for the First Semester

- Establish a management system for monitoring student progress.
- Emphasize the roles of students as professional office workers and model the language of the workplace when speaking to them (see pages 32–34).
- Remember to be a "one-minute manager" and spend a minute or two with each student two or three times per week (see page 23).
- Consider recruiting one or two volunteers from the community for your classroom. Contact a few service organizations and tell them what you would like a volunteer to do. You may want volunteers to begin working 2-hour shifts once a week.

Notes on First Semester

New Student-Employee Orientation

Student Data Forms

Reading Pretests

Keyboarding Instruction

Monitoring Student Progress

Basic Reading Instruction

Reading Comprehension

Things to Do

Other Ideas

Semester at a Glance

- Continue instruction with reading comprehension software programs.
- Introduce goal setting and require weekly goal sheets.
- Have students write a weekly essay, following the steps in the writing process and using a word-processing program.
- Assign first book report for the year.
- Introduce the journalism components of the curriculum.
- Have students write news, sports, and feature stories, and editorials.

Monitoring Student Progress

You can monitor student progress by walking around the classroom to see what students are working on and how they are progressing and by reviewing student progress record sheets and reading the printouts of the students' answers to essay questions.

Weekly Goal Setting

- Appropriate for all students and adults.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways, allocating time to improve performance, monitoring and correcting performance.

Discuss with students the importance of setting goals. Explain that if they want to get anywhere in life, they must set goals. To reach a long-term goal, such as graduating from high school, there are short-term goals they need to set and achieve along the way. Examples of these are earning the required credits for graduation and passing all of their classes.

Tell your students that they will be given a goals sheet every Monday (see page 136). Students must set four goals for themselves each week. One of these goals must relate to improving reading and writing skills, one must relate to learning and practicing a SCANS skill, one must be an academic goal, and the last may be personal or academic.

Examples of academic goals for the week might be to attend all classes, pass the math test on Thursday, get to each class on time, work hard to improve reading skills, or complete an essay by Thursday. Personal goals for the week could include such things as exercising three times, getting a driver's license, practicing a second language, getting along with parents or brothers and sisters, and saving money.

Encourage students to think of strategies for reaching their goals and to list the best ones under the heading "How will I accomplish this goal?" Each Friday have students complete the sheets by indicating whether they have accomplished their goals.

The entire concept of setting goals is alien to most at-risk students, who, for the most part, have an external locus of control. As a result, these students tend to attribute whatever happens to them to luck, chance, or forces beyond their control. Thus, the importance of setting goals is a powerful and important concept they need to learn.

One way to make setting goals appealing to your students is to give them a grade for their weekly goals sheets. If they complete the sheets and accomplish some of their goals, you may want to give a grade of A or B. I have found that students learn to take these goals sheets very seriously, and I am continually amazed by their honesty. They will admit to skipping a few classes or will offer detailed explanations as to why they didn't achieve a particular goal.

Writing Skills Instruction

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, interpreting and communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, interpersonal skills, critical thinking skills, allocating time to improve performance, applying technology to task, communicating information in writing, knowing how to learn, monitoring and correcting performance.

The Writing Process

The more students experience the writing process—prewriting, writing, editing, revising, and publication—the better their writing skills will be. Thus, it is very important to require them to write a full-page, double-spaced essay each week. Students will continue to write an essay every week throughout the fourth semester of the program. During the fifth and sixth semesters, the emphasis on writing will continue, with the students working on writing projects and research papers in addition to essays.

Program Potential

The concept of setting goals is alien to most at-risk students. Weekly goal setting will help students understand this powerful concept.

Weekly Goals Sheet

GOAL	How will I accomplish this goal?	Goal accomplished?
Improve Reading & Writing Skills		

GOAL	How will I accomplish this goal?	Goal accomplished?
SCANS Skill		

GOAL	How will I accomplish this goal?	Goal accomplished?
Academic Goal		

GOAL	How will I accomplish this goal?	Goal accomplished?
Personal Growth Goal or Academic Goal		

Prewriting. Consider introducing the topic for the week's writing assignment during an office meeting with your students every Monday. Spend 15 or more minutes discussing the topic; helping students brainstorm ideas they can incorporate into their papers; and discussing ways to introduce, organize, and present these ideas. The essays are due on Friday.

Writing. Students will use a word-processing program used in the business world, such as Microsoft Word, for the writing stage. Introduce your students to the program by showing them the basic skills they need to write their weekly essays, such as double-spacing text; changing fonts and point size; and creating, saving, opening, and printing a document.

Consider providing your students with an outline showing what should be included in each of the paragraphs of their essays. Students can then turn each of your paragraph topics into a topic sentence and then type the content for each paragraph below each topic sentence. Once students have written their first drafts, ask that they read their papers aloud softly to themselves and then make corrections before passing them in.

One way students can catch some of their errors is to read their papers aloud quietly.

Editing. Depending on your students' understanding of writing and grammar, you may want to discuss the three editing strategies described below or have your students focus on mastering one or two of the strategies.

Proofreading. Require your students to proofread their work before turning it in. You might tell them that all great writers have to write several rough drafts before they complete their final products. Explain that because a person can think faster than he or she can write or type, the mind is generally a few sentences ahead of the hand, and the gap between thought and word can lead to mistakes. One way they can catch some of these mistakes is to read their papers aloud quietly before passing them in.

Although adult students are more likely to do this than teenagers, who are much more self-conscious, students who use this technique will notice a dramatic decrease in errors on their papers.

Peer editing. Peer editing can be a very effective method of teaching writing. Encourage students to proofread one another's essays from time to time. This strategy may be more effective after students have corrected several essays and have learned how to identify some writing errors.

It can also be useful to have students simply read one another's essays and give each other general feedback as to whether the paper was easy to understand, whether there was a topic sentence and a conclusion, and whether the paragraphs flowed smoothly from one to the next.

Through the writing process, students will become aware of their own writing styles and the types of errors they commonly make. This awareness will help them identify and correct those particular problems. If a student is aware that he or she frequently misspells the words "a lot" as "alot," then the student can stop each time that phrase appears in an essay and make sure it is spelled correctly.

Grammar checking. You may want to introduce your students to the process of checking their essays for possible grammatical problems with the grammar-check tool in their word-processing program. Explain that the tool will highlight text that may contain a grammatical error, but the student still needs to determine if there actually is an error and, if so, how it should be corrected. Because of the knowledge of grammar that this tool requires of those who use it, you may decide to postpone introducing it until the final semester of the course.

Feedback and revision. Correct student essays as soon as possible so that the writing will still be fresh in the students' minds when they get their papers back. You may want to return the papers to them ungraded, but with some encouraging, positive comments in addition to your corrections.

Ask the students to make the corrections and any other changes they think are needed before they turn in a clean, printed copy for a grade. Stress the importance of understanding the corrections so they can learn from the revision process.

Publication. After students have corrected their essays, try to publish their writing. Although you may not be able to do this for every set of essays, consider submitting appropriate essays to local and regional literacy newsletters and magazines and finding other ways of publishing your students' work within your program through class newsletters and newspaper projects.

Using Word-Processing Software to Teach Writing

Once you begin teaching your students to use a word-processing program when they write and revise their essays, you will be pleasantly surprised at how much easier it can be to teach students the writing process. Students will not complain about having to revise and reprint their papers, and you will not have to struggle to decipher handwritten essays.

When your students begin the writing module of the program, you will want to introduce them to the word-processing software program you have chosen. Cover the basics of the program, such as how to create, save, retrieve, and print a file; how to make text bold, underlined, or italic; and how to use tools, such as the spell-check feature and the thesaurus. Stress to students the fact that they are acquiring important word-processing skills that they can list on their resumes and job applications. Thus, they are improving their chances of obtaining a better job.

Scheduling computer use. If you have 20 computers and only 20 students, each student can use a computer daily. On the other hand, if you have only 5 computers for your 20 students, you may need to have students write their rough drafts by hand and then take turns typing them. While one person is typing, the other three can read the newspaper, teach each other vocabulary words, and begin the cooperative learning activity discussed later in this chapter. They could also proofread and correct one another's papers.

Using the spell-check feature. Encourage and require students to use the spell-check feature as part of the editing process. Because this feature works only if the writer can read and understand the meaning of the alternative words offered,

The 21st Century

One publication that prints student writing is Teen Ink, *a 36-page magazine written by teenagers. More information on this publication is provided on page 28.*

caution your students to avoid automatically selecting the first word in the list and to consult a dictionary if they do not understand the words offered by the spell-check list. You can help your students understand why this is important by sharing some of the following bloopers I have collected from my students who have used this feature:

- *Greeting from a business letter:* To Whom It May Consume
- *From an essay on how to make a Big Mac:* Now you should have something that looks like a Big Mac. We hope it's o.k.. It not, go complain to the manger at the McDonald's where you perished it.
- *From a thank-you letter:* I really appetite what you are doing for me.
- *From a writing assignment on writing business letters:* I have interviewed your resume and it seems that you have the qualifactions needed for the job.
- *From a career research project:* Flight attendants have to go to a class that has to do with learning how to walk on a moving plane and how to sever people without wasting food or drinks on them.

Narrative Essay

Perhaps the simplest kind of essay to write is the narrative essay, which tells a story. If you decide to assign this kind of essay, you can explain to your students that they are simply going to write about all of the events that occurred in a particular story. During the prewriting phase, you might want to read them a sample narrative essay or provide them with a copy of a narrative essay to use as a model. Discuss various types of topic sentences that introduce the topic and capture the reader's attention and interest.

Organization. Ask students what they think would be a meaningful and logical way to organize a narrative essay. Point out that discussing the events in a story in chronological order is probably the simplest and most effective approach. Also discuss the need for a conclusion.

The Hazards of Using Spell Check

Now you should have something that looks like a Big Mac. We hope it's o.k.. It not, go complain to the manger at the McDonald's where you perished it.

……

Flight attendants have to go to a class that has to do with learning how to walk on a moving plane and how to sever people without wasting food or drinks on them.

Topics. I have found that the most effective topics are those related to current news events of interest to the students. A number of writing topics are provided below. For additional topics, you can draw on areas of interest to the students. Encourage students to read the newspaper and watch the news on television. Then ask them to write about major events and issues in the news.

Topics for High School Students

Painful Experience, Valuable Lesson

Tell about a painful experience that taught you a valuable lesson.

An Experience You Will Never Forget

Examples include your first day on a job, the day of some meaningful personal experience, a frightening experience, your first day of high school, your first date.

Classroom of the Future

What will the high school classroom of the future be like? Discuss the (1) organization of the room (furniture, etc.), (2) technology in the classroom, (3) roles of the teacher and students, (4) subjects being taught and how they are being taught, and (5) assessment of how well students have learned the material.

How to Get Guns Out of Schools

Every day, many students stay home because they are afraid to go to a school where some students carry weapons. How can we solve this problem?

Write to a Teenager in a War-Torn Part of the World

There are several accounts of the war in Sarajevo in diaries of teenagers. If you are able to obtain one of these, read excerpts of it to the students before having them tackle this essay.

Advice for an Eighth Grader

What advice would you give an eighth grader about doing well in high school academically, getting involved in extracurricular activities in school, staying out of trouble, and choosing friends?

Most Important Problem

What is the most important problem facing teens today, and how would you solve it? Do you have a suggestion for improving the situation or solving that problem? Describe that solution or recommendation.

Fast-Food Dream

If you were given the opportunity to begin your own fast-food chain, what type of restaurant would it be? What type of food would you serve? What would be your theme, symbol, or mascot? Would you have any unique or special feature for your restaurant (for example, food servers on rollerblades, musical burgers, or international fast foods)?

What Do You Care About?

Discuss the main issues or problems that concern you and explain why you care about them.

Learning to Get Along

Our population has become very diverse and multicultural. We need to appreciate one another's differences and learn to get along with each other. What can we do to erase the prejudice and tension between different groups and cultures in this country? How can we learn to get along peacefully?

What Are Your Goals in Life?

Where do you hope to be in 5 years? In 10 years? What do you hope to accomplish as an adult? What careers are you interested in? If you could do anything you wanted in the next 10 years, what would you do? What type of preparation, education, and/or training would you need?

Baby Think It Over Doll

This lifelike doll is being used in schools to provide a reality check on what parenting involves and to discourage students from becoming teen parents. The doll contains a computer chip that produces the piercing cry of an infant every 2 to 4 hours, 24 hours a day. To stop the infant's crying, the teen must turn the doll on its back, insert a key, and hold the key there for 10 to 35 minutes—the time it takes to feed a baby. A microprocessor inside the doll records how long it has been crying before it is picked up and how roughly the baby has been handled. In an essay, describe the Baby Think It Over Doll and then discuss your opinion of this product. Do you feel it would be an effective tool in decreasing the rate of teen pregnancy?

The most effective topics are often those related to current news events of interest to the students.

The Right Stuff

What qualities and qualifications should the president of the United States have? Which of these are the most important? Should the president have a college education? Should someone who isn't married or doesn't have children be president? What personal qualities are important? Could the president be a woman? A person from a minority group?

Topics for High School Students and Adult Learners

The Ideal Mate

Write an essay describing the type of person that you feel would be an ideal mate for you. What personal qualities would that person have?

Winning the Lottery

How would winning a million dollars in the lottery affect your life? Would it change you as a person?

The Ideal Job

Write a description of your ideal job and tell why it would be ideal for you.

Letter From the Future

What will your child write to you when he or she becomes 21 years old? Write a letter to yourself as though you were your 21-year-old son or daughter.

Your 21st Century Job

What will your job in the 21st century be like? What type of technology, if any, will you use in this job?

Letter to the President

Write a letter to the president of the United States in which you discuss how he or she could make America a better place to live.

Favorite Recipe

Describe your favorite recipe. Be as exact and specific as you can so that someone reading your essay could use your directions to make the recipe. Include a list of the ingredients needed.

Unforgettable Day

Write about an unforgettable day. Why is this day so memorable? (It could be memorable because of a pleasant or unpleasant event. What was the event and how did it affect you?)

A Bad Habit

Describe the process you went through to break yourself of a bad habit, such as cigarette smoking, nail biting, or overeating.

Top of the List

Imagine listing the things you want, starting with the thing you want most. What would the first item be, and what are your reasons for wanting this thing the most?

Time for a Raise

Write a paper persuading your boss to give you a raise. Give good reasons, and be as convincing as you can.

Favorite Saying

Select one of your favorite sayings (e.g., "Beauty is only skin deep.") and discuss whether you think the saying is true or false. Use examples from your own experience to support your opinion.

A Successful Marriage

What is the secret of a successful marriage? How do you make a marriage work?

AIDS Education

Even with all of the AIDS information that is available and with the AIDS education that has been done so far, statistics seem to indicate that many people who are at risk for contracting the disease are not paying attention. How can we educate people about this terrible disease so that they will listen?

Friendship

What is true friendship? What are the qualities that make a real friend?

Definition

Define something intangible, such as love, prejudice, integrity, or loyalty. Support your definition with reasons and examples from your own experience.

Money Is the Key to Happiness

Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

Drinking and Driving

What do you think should be the penalty for drinking and driving? Should guilty drivers lose their licenses permanently? Should they have to put license plates that say "Drunk Driver" on their cars? What do you think the penalty should be for this offense?

The World of the Illiterate

Think of an average day in your life and describe what it would be like for someone who could not read.

Take a Trip

If you could visit any city in the world, where would you go? Why would you select that particular city?

A Perfect World

What is your idea of a perfect world? What would it be like? What things would change?

Book Reports

Require students to write a book report. Students' reading skills improve when they read, and they will read more if they are permitted to read something of interest to them. Try to be somewhat flexible, especially with their first few book reports, and allow them to select a book that interests them, perhaps with the help of the school librarian. Once they begin to read books each month on a regular basis, you may want to give them a list of suggested books or require a particular type of book, such as biography or nonfiction.

The format of the report is up to you. However, it is a good idea to require students to include comments about the literary elements, including plot, setting, characters, theme, conflict, and climax in their reports. These are terms that they will be expected to know and that appear on the high-stakes graduation tests that many states require.

I found that once my students had read eight or nine books in a school year, they felt very proud of their accomplishment. The more they read, the more they improved their reading skills, and, in turn, their self-esteem and self-confidence.

The Journalism Component

- Appropriate for all students and adults.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, interpreting and communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, interpersonal skills, critical thinking skills, understanding social systems.

A journalism component is incorporated into the program throughout semesters two through six to improve students' literacy skills and encourage students to develop the habit of reading the newspaper regularly. The journalism component provides obvious benefits for the students and more subtle but equally significant benefits for the nation. Thomas Jefferson once said, "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate to prefer the latter." Clearly, Jefferson realized that for democracy to work, it is essential to have a literate, informed electorate. The journalism component encourages students to become literate and informed through reading and understanding the news media.

Having your students read the newspaper daily will give them added reading practice, expand their vocabularies, and provide them with additional writing assignments. Because most newspapers are written at the eighth-grade reading level, they might not be too difficult for your students to read or comprehend.

Easy Reading

Try using USA Today *if the local newspaper is too difficult for students. The format of the newspaper and the short but interesting stories seem to appeal to those students who have trouble with the reading level of other newspapers. My students really enjoyed reading* USA Today. *They made sure to get a copy as soon as we received the papers each day.*

An excellent teaching tool. The newspaper can be used to teach students to distinguish between fact (in news stories) and opinion (in editorials) and to introduce your students to a world of useful information, such as employment ads, theater listings, weather forecasts, news, and sporting events coverage. The newspaper can also be used as a motivational tool in your classes as students look forward to reaching the part of the journalism component that requires them to create and write for their own newspaper.

Preparing for the journalism component. Before teaching this component, arrange to have copies of actual newspapers on hand so students can read and discuss sample news stories, sports news stories, feature stories, and editorials as well as other sections of the newspaper. Most newspapers have Newspapers in Education (NIE) programs and will offer reasonable prices for multiple copies of the daily newspaper for classrooms. Many newspapers also provide lesson ideas and classroom activities involving the newspaper.

The News Story

Journalism Component I

Introduce students to the journalism component by reading actual news stories in the newspaper with them. Explain that journalistic writing is a form of writing and that all they need to write news stories are proper writing skills and information on a topic.

The inverted pyramid. Most news stories are written in a way that presents an inverted pyramid of information. Ask your students to imagine an upside-down pyramid. The wide part at the top of the pyramid is where the main facts appear in a news story. These main facts often appear in the first paragraph, which is called the lead. As the pyramid narrows, the information in the news story becomes less important. As you reach the bottom point of the inverted pyramid, the information is interesting but not vital to the news story. There are several reasons for using the inverted pyramid style in newswriting:

1. It is a natural way to tell a story. If you want to tell someone about an event, you begin by telling who did

what, when and where they did it, and why and how it happened.

2. It enables the reader to get the important facts of the story quickly, without reading the entire story.
3. It helps the person who writes the headlines, because most headlines are based on information contained in the first paragraph of the story.
4. It makes it easy to shorten the story if it is too long. When the least important information is at the end of the story, text can be cut from the end without sacrificing any vital information.

Leads. The first item in a news story is the lead. The lead is the first paragraph of the news story. It is generally, but not always, one sentence. The lead must capture the reader's attention, provide the important facts, and introduce the story's topic quickly.

Explain to your students that the lead can be the most difficult part of the news story to write because it is the most important. Most leads include the six elements that belong in nearly every news story: who, what, when, where, why, and how. Examples of these elements include:

WHO?	New York governor and legislative leaders.
WHAT?	Last-minute compromise sought on rent-control system affecting renters in New York City.
WHEN?	Midnight, June 15.
WHERE?	Albany, New York.
WHY?	State rent regulations will expire, endangering the low rents paid by millions of New York City residents.
HOW?	Without rent regulation, many tenants may face eviction when their leases are due for renewal and landlords raise their rents. Legislators seek a compromise between those

> who defend rent laws and those who want a gradual end to the laws.

At one time, newspaper editors thought that the five Ws and one H belonged in every lead. This is no longer true. The most effective lead is the one that tells the story best. The type of lead used most commonly with inverted pyramid stories is the summary lead, which summarizes the facts briefly in the first sentence of the news story. For example: *With state regulations due to expire at midnight Sunday, the governor and legislative leaders sought a last-minute compromise on a system that allows millions of New Yorkers to enjoy below-market rents.* Good leads also make the reader want to read the rest of the story. For example: *Federal officials in New York say that they have broken up a charge-now-never-pay scheme.*

Finding leads. Ask the students to find and read the leads in the news stories on the front page of the newspapers you have in class. After reading each lead aloud, ask the students what they think the news story is about. Ask them which leads made them want to read the rest of the story. Discuss how those leads are written. Discuss what it is about those particular leads that arouses the interest of the readers.

The most effective lead is the one that tells the story best.

Writing leads. Have the students try writing leads before they actually write news stories. Give them topics for news stories, or use the ones below, and ask them to write sample leads. They should be sure to include at least some of the five Ws and one H in their leads. You may want to mention to your students that in real life, people who write news stories gather all the information first and then write the leads for their stories. In this exercise, however, students are encouraged to use facts they know or to create information they can use to write leads.

Possible Topics for News Stories:

Man makes first contact with extraterrestrial beings.

Cure for AIDS discovered.

Olympics to be held here (in your city or town).

First woman elected president of United States.

Public schools to be open year-round, 24 hours per day.

Revolutionary new automobile is environmentally safe, gets 100 miles per gallon of fuel.

Futuristic high school to open in shopping mall.

High school chemistry student discovers cure for common cold.

Additional activities. Obtain copies of a morning and an afternoon paper, or two different newspapers, and have the students find articles on the same news story. How are they the same? How are they different? Which lead do the students think is more effective?

Have students cut out three to five news stories that use the inverted pyramid style of writing and mark the leads with a highlighter. Then have them rewrite the leads so that they are more effective at arousing the reader's interest.

Have students watch the news on television and ask them how the leads in television news stories differ from the leads in newspaper news stories. Discuss their findings in class.

Impress upon the students the importance of reading the newspaper and/or watching the news on television daily, and require them to do so. Ask them to write a paragraph each day about a current event in the news.

Writing News Stories

Now that the students are familiar with news stories, leads, the five Ws and one H, and the inverted pyramid style of writing, give them an assignment to write a news story.

Instruct the students to use the inverted pyramid style of writing or one of the other styles of news writing to write a news story. The story must include the five Ws and one H. They should begin the story with a lead that best tells the story and also makes the reader want to keep reading. The news story should include facts, not the student's opinion.

You may wish to have the students develop the sample leads they wrote into news stories, or you may want to have them write news stories for the class newsletter or for the newspaper project that older students are working on at the end of the journalism component.

Journalism Component II

Other Stories

The second journalism component focuses on the sports story and the feature story. This component offers you the option of having students choose which type of story to read and write for the journalism assignment in this semester.

The Sports Story

Writing a sports story is similar to writing a news story. However, sportswriters are aware that the games and events they write about have been witnessed by hundreds—maybe thousands—of people who are not interested in reading a mere play-by-play summary of the game or event.

The readers want to know the inside story: How did the coaches and players react to something? What were the coach and officials arguing about in the first quarter of the game? Sportswriters must learn to take accurate notes very quickly because the events of the game can happen faster than they can write. Sports fans want the stories to convey the excitement or heartbreak of the games. They expect the sportswriters to interpret the games and the team's reactions to the games. As a result, the language in sports stories tends to be more colorful than that of news stories.

Writing sports stories. Ask students to write a sports story about a recent sporting event they attended, watched on television, or listened to on the radio. Students will want to provide the specifics of the event (who played who, the scores, which players did well or poorly) but also convey the excitement of the game and explain any unusual occurrences. Because writing sports stories may not appeal to all of your students, you may want to assign a sports story to a few students and give a different assignment to the other students.

The Feature Story

A feature story covers a topic of interest to the readers and is often timeless in that it can be published at any time during the year. A feature story can also have a lighter tone than a news story and might even be funny. Because feature stories are not usually related to any news event, the inverted pyramid style of writing is generally not appropriate for writing feature stories.

The total effect of a feature story may be to appeal to the reader's emotions.

Feature stories may provide background information on a major news story. For example, a feature story might introduce one of the candidates during an election campaign. Feature stories may shed new light on an old subject, or they might offer helpful tips on something of interest to readers. Examples of this include stories on how to save money on groceries, how to lose weight, how to help a child do better in school, the best restaurant meals in town, exciting summer vacations, an auto repair shop run by women, and unusual or exotic hobbies.

Feature stories do not express the writer's opinion, but the total effect of the story may be to appeal to the readers' emotions. For example, the story may convey a tone of sympathy if the story is about a person struggling with a disability or tone of appreciation if the story is about how neighbors are working together to solve a problem.

Writing feature stories. After reading the feature stories in the newspaper with the students, spend some time with them brainstorming for topics for feature stories that they would enjoy writing. Then ask students to write feature stories on these or other topics. You may also want to have some students write sports stories and others write feature stories. The stories may be used for your class newsletter or simply for practice in writing.

Journalism Component III

The Editorial

Editorials provide the writer with an opportunity to express his or her opinion. While news, feature, and sports stories are generally written to inform, an editorial can be written to

- explain or clarify a program or policy.
- persuade readers to accept the writer's viewpoint on an issue.
- answer or respond to a criticism or an opposing viewpoint on an issue.
- praise a person, group, organization, or institution for doing something noteworthy.
- criticize a person, group, organization, or institution for doing something that is inappropriate, unfair, etc.
- express the writer's opinion.

Reading editorials. It is important to have students read some examples of editorials in newspapers before they try to write their own editorials. You may want to provide them with examples of editorials that have been written for the reasons listed above, and you may also want to provide students with a list of the reasons for writing an editorial. Read the editorials aloud and ask students to try to identify the reason each editorial was written. Stress that one of the differences between news stories and editorials is that news stories contain facts, and editorials may contain only someone's opinion. It is important that they keep this in mind when reading the newspaper and not automatically regard editorial content as factual.

Writing editorials. The writing style of an editorial differs slightly from that of a news story. Most editorials are written using the following outline:

1. Introduction—presents a brief statement of background regarding the topic.
2. Reaction—presents the opinion of the writer or of the newspaper.
3. Details—supports the opinion or position taken by the writer or newspaper.
4. Conclusion—offers recommendations, alternatives, or solutions to the situation or problem; also restates the position of the writer or newspaper.

Name These Newsmakers

Have students cut out faces of famous people and mount them on a poster board in the room. Number the faces, and ask students to identify the newsmakers. The first three people to identify all of the newsmakers on the poster can win prizes (pens, small calculators, colored markers, candy bars, etc.).

Encourage students to select faces of people in politics, government, the media, entertainment, sports, and medicine. Also try to select people from different ethnic groups, and make sure the newsmakers represent both sexes as equally as possible. Put up a new poster every few weeks to keep the newsmakers on the posters up to date.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Helpful Tips for Writing Editorials

1. Be brief and concise.
2. Make sure that you have researched the information thoroughly.
3. Do not preach; instead, persuade.
4. Do not include gossip or unsubstantiated information.
5. Be sincere.
6. Choose subjects of interest to your readers.
7. Be fair; do not ignore opposing viewpoints.

After reading the editorials in the newspaper with the students, spend some time brainstorming topics that might be good subjects for editorials in your class newsletter or for a school newspaper that your students would read. Then spend some time prewriting with them and discussing the ideas and information one might cover in each of those subjects. Review with them the four-part outline of most editorials. Have them write editorials that they think would be of interest to the other students in class.

Notes on Second Semester

Reading Comprehension

Weekly Goal Setting

Writing Skills Instruction

The Writing Process

Using a Word-Processing Program

Narrative Essay

The Journalism Component

The News Story

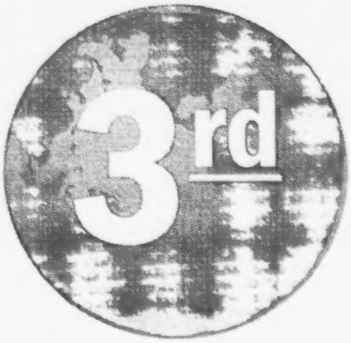
The Sports Story

The Feature Story

The Editorial

Things to Do

Other Ideas



Semester at a Glance

- Continue reading comprehension software.
- Continue weekly goal setting.
- Continue with book reports.
- Continue journalism component.
- Continue weekly essay writing.
- Assign several or all of the following types of essays: descriptive, process, and comparison and contrast.
- Incorporate vocabulary development into reading software programs and newspaper reading activity.
- Have students practice silent, sustained reading.
- Prepare for standards-based graduation testing.

Weekly Essay Writing

Students continue to write weekly essays in the third semester. You may want to assign topics from the lists on pages 141–145, from your own topics, or from current events covered in the news media. You may also want to have students broaden their essay-writing skills by assigning several or all of the following types of essays: descriptive, process, and comparison and contrast.

The Descriptive Essay

A descriptive essay uses sensory impressions, facts, and other details to describe the essay's topic. Tell students that the detail is the fundamental element of the descriptive essay and is also used in other essays even though it may be used in different ways. Explain to students that their goal in writing a descriptive essay is to use the words of the essay to create a picture in the reader's mind of what the essay is describing. An important part of this description may include the student's sensory impressions. How did the object being described look, sound, smell, and feel?

One example of a real-life situation in which your students might need to provide a written description is writing their version of what happened during an automobile accident. A student might be required by an auto insurance company to furnish a written description of an accident in order for the company to process the student's accident claim. On the job, students might be asked to describe a new product in a brochure or convince their company to buy a piece of equipment by describing their department's need for it. Other workplace situations requiring a descriptive essay include the descriptions of problems and their solutions that teleservice workers and computer technicians must provide when responding to customer-service calls. Employees may also need to provide a written description of a project or proposed department expansion if their company is considering either of these options.

Details, details, details. The fundamental element for descriptive essays is "details, details, details." The descriptive essay must be built on concrete details that help the reader see, smell, touch, hear, and taste. When students are in the prewriting phase, they should focus on finding as many specific details on the topic as they can so their written description will paint a vivid, clear word-picture for the reader.

Organizing the descriptive essay. Discuss several of the ways students can organize the details in their descriptive essays. If writing about an event, students might want to describe the details as they happened in *chronological* order. If writing about a place, students might want to describe the details *visually* from left to right, from top to bottom, or from outside to inside. If writing about a person, students might want to describe the person's physical appearance first and then describe the person's inward appearance—the characteristics that make that person unique. Another way of describing a person is to begin with a distinguishing characteristic and then describe more minor characteristics.

Possible Topics for a Descriptive Essay

Your New Job

Describe your new job in this 21st century classroom. Include an explanation of your new role as a professional worker in this office environment.

Computer Software Program

Describe a computer software program you use in this 21st century classroom. Include an explanation of how other professional student workers could benefit by using the program.

Your Favorite Place

Describe your favorite place so the reader has a clear mental image of this place.

Your Favorite Person

Describe your favorite person so the reader has a clear mental image of this person.

A Missing Pet

What if your pet ran away or became lost? An accurate description might help other people identify your pet

Teaching Tip

One way to illustrate the need for specific details is to ask students to draw a medium-sized circle on a piece of paper. Have them hold up their papers and look at the sizes of circles drawn by their classmates. Ask them how many circles are the same size. There are so many different sizes of circles because the phrase "medium-sized" was not specific enough to help everyone draw similarly sized circles. Now give them much more specific instructions, perhaps asking them to draw a circle the size of a baseball. This time, their circles should be much closer in size.

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and return it to you. Write a description of your pet that could be used to identify it.

The Process Essay

The process essay describes the steps taken to do something. You can note that one way to approach the process essay is to imagine yourself teaching someone else how to do something. This instruction may be as simple as a step-by-step explanation of how to change a flat tire or a much more complex explanation of how to do your job.

Tell your students that the process essay is a challenge for them to prove their mastery of a task.

If you can teach it, you can do it. You may tell students that this kind of essay is a challenge for them to prove their mastery of a task. One way to know if they really understand how to do something is to teach someone else how to do it. It is only when they try to explain each step they take, each decision they make, that they realize the process involved in completing a task. Writing a process essay is one way of finding out if they really understand how to complete a certain task.

Organizing the process essay. One way to organize a process essay is to present the information in a *step-by-step* manner. A more complex process may require a student to organize his or her essay around a *decision tree*, perhaps separating the discussion of each decision, and the different options arising from that decision, in separate paragraphs. It may be very useful for students tackling the decision tree kind of essay to first diagram the process, using lines and brief phrases to recreate visually the process from its beginning to its several or many ends. An example of this kind of process might be describing a sales strategy for an employee of a clothing store, with a customer's yes, no, or maybe answers or behavior leading the salesperson to different strategies.

Possible Topics for the Process Essay

Explain how to quit a bad habit.

Explain how to make one of your favorite foods.

Explain how to use a particular computer program.

Explain how to present yourself in an impressive and convincing manner in a job interview.

Explain how to convince someone to do something (for example, how do you convince your boss to give you a raise?).

Explain how to use the following features of your word-processing program: cut and paste, spell check, and changing text to italics.

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

A comparison and contrast essay focuses on how two things are similar to and different from each other. Explain to the students that they will select two things, such as the play and the motion picture version of *Romeo and Juliet*, and will explain how they are alike and how they are different.

Know what it is, and you'll know what it isn't. The following prewriting strategy will also help your students understand how the comparison and contrast essay builds on what they learned by writing a descriptive essay. Students begin preparing for the essay by listing details about each item as though they were writing a descriptive essay.

After students have identified the two things they will discuss, have them draw a line down the middle of a piece of paper and write the name of the first item at the top of one half of the page and the name of the second item at the top of the other half of the page. Then have them fold the paper along the drawn line so that only one half of the page shows. Have students write down as many details about the item as they can, making a list of details down the page. After a set amount of time, have them turn the page over and repeat the process with the second item.

Then ask students to unfold the page so they can see both lists. Ask them to study the lists and draw lines between details that are similar. Then have them study the lists and draw dotted lines between details that cover the same characteristic, but are different. At the end of the exercise, most students will have a page that visually shows them several characteristics of each item they can compare (the straight lines) and several they can contrast (the dotted lines).

Organizing the comparison and contrast essay. One way to organize this essay would be to select one aspect of the two items and discuss the differences and similarities between that aspect in each item. It might help your students to think of their essays in terms of paragraphs that compare and paragraphs that contrast. They may want to outline the essay before they begin writing by carefully writing a topic sentence for each paragraph that clearly indicates whether the student will be discussing similar or dissimilar characteristics.

Vocabulary Development

Developing Vocabulary with Software

- Appropriate for all students.

Suggested Topics for Comparison and Contrast Essay

Compare and contrast a book and a movie based on the same story.

Compare and contrast two different places where you have lived or visited.

Compare and contrast two jobs you have had.

Compare and contrast two television programs on the same theme (two police programs, two courtroom programs, etc.).

Compare and contrast a friend or a relative's views to your own on a topic (music, food, etc.).

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- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, listening, interpreting and communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, critical thinking skills.

Begin students on the vocabulary development activities that are included in the reading comprehension section of the first semester (see page 125). All of the software programs mentioned on those pages include vocabulary development features. In some cases, certain words are presented in a different color. When the student clicks on such a word, a pop-up box or new screen appears with the word's definition. Some programs also include sample sentences that use the vocabulary word or expression and that display both synonyms and antonyms for the word or expression. There are a number of good software packages for developing vocabulary. One such program is Davidson's *Word Attack*. Another is the Carmen Sandiego software series.

The Carmen Sandiego Software Series

- Appropriate for all students reading above the 5th-grade level. *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?* is probably the most appropriate software for adult literacy courses.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, interpreting and communicating information, applying technology to task, locating information and applying it, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, interpersonal skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving, participating as a member of a team.

In the Carmen Sandiego series, students learn about countries around the world and develop a number of skills as they try to catch criminals by using the clues provided by the programs.

Introduce your students to the Carmen Sandiego software series or a similar vocabulary development software program:

Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?

Where in the USA Is Carmen Sandiego?

Where in Europe Is Carmen Sandiego?

Where in Space Is Carmen Sandiego?

In the Carmen Sandiego series, students learn about different countries around the world and develop a number of skills as they try to catch criminals by using the clues provided by the programs.

You may want your students to begin with the *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?* program before they use the other programs in the series. The programs will help your students develop their vocabulary, reading comprehension, thinking skills, memory skills, ability to follow directions, knowledge of geography and cultures, and ability to use an almanac to find information.

These programs also offer an opportunity for students to work together in groups of two or three and develop their team-building skills. When my students work in groups of three on these programs, generally one student is at the keyboard, another looks for information related to clues in the *World Almanac*, and the third checks the world map for geographical information.

Developing Vocabulary with the Newspaper

Journalism Component

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, interpreting and communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, critical thinking skills, approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways, participating as a member of a team, allocating time to improve performance, teaching others.

Students will also continue with vocabulary development as they read the newspaper daily and as you discuss new words they encounter in the articles they read.

Preparation for High-Stakes Testing

Increasing demands nationwide for more standardized testing and high-stakes graduation testing have required teachers to incorporate test preparation and test-taking skills into the curriculum. Incorporating standards-based instruction into the curriculum presented here, which is designed for differentiated instruction, can be challenging, but it is not impossible.

In the 21st century workplace classroom, students work at their skill level and proceed at their own pace along a continuum of increasingly more difficult work until they achieve to their maximum potential. The instructional methodologies and the reading software are designed to accommodate varying learning styles and to engage students. Students are able to see a connection or relevance between the curriculum and their life experiences, interests, and what they will need to succeed in the real world and in the workplace. Students are graded on performance-based assessment and on how much improvement they have made.

On one hand, teachers are being admonished to accommodate individual differences in their instructional practices, and on the other hand, they are asked to ensure that every student will be able to demonstrate various competencies at a prescribed level on the same test instrument. In a program such as this one, with a student population comprised of students in grades 9–12 who are reading at or below the fifth-grade level, the task of preparing all students to pass the high-stakes graduation tests is even more of a challenge. However, the reality is that these students are not exempt from passing the test as a graduation requirement, and thus, we must do everything we can to help them achieve this requirement.

Scheduling This Segment of the Curriculum

This segment of the curriculum begins in the third semester, but it must be covered every year during both the fall and spring semesters in order to benefit all students. The specific details and curriculum outline for preparing for high-stakes testing are included in Appendix B. Refer to these pages throughout the curriculum in your work on high-stakes test preparation.

Notes on Third Semester

Weekly Essay Writing

The Descriptive Essay

The Process Essay

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

Vocabulary Development

With Software

With the Newspaper (Journalism Component)

Preparation for High-Stakes Testing

Things to Do

Other Ideas

Semester at a Glance

- Continue weekly goal setting.
- Introduce writing to enter the world of work; write resumes and cover letters.
- Begin literature component.
- Continue with book reports.
- Assign student book publishers project.
- Have students read *Romeo and Juliet* and *West Side Story*.
- Discuss poetry and figures of speech.
- Have students practice silent, sustained reading.

Writing to Enter the World of Work

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways, allocating time to improve performance, monitoring and correcting performance.

This section covers the written documents students need to understand and master when they apply for jobs. These documents include job applications, resumes, and cover letters. Other types of business documents, such as business letters and memos, are covered in the fifth semester.

When you introduce this section, you may want to explain to your students that the type of business writing they will do to enter the world of work is different from the essays and assignments they have been writing. There are standard formats for resumes and cover letters, and the information students include in these documents must be correct and complete. Perhaps the most important difference is that the students must complete the entire writing process before they submit the material to a prospective employer. In the office classroom, students have an opportunity to edit and revise their essays before receiving their final grade. In business writing, however, once they hand the interviewer a job application and cover letter or a resume, they will not have any second chances to correct or revise those documents. In the classroom, a misspelled word or an awkward sentence might lower the grade. But in the workplace, an interviewer may not offer the student a job if he or she finds a misspelled word or an awkward sentence on an application, resume, or cover letter. As a result, students need to make sure they follow the correct format and edit and revise for content when they complete these types of documents.

Completing a Job Application

Many of your students will already be familiar with job applications. You might introduce this crucial part of writing to enter the world of work by saying that nearly all employers require applicants to complete a job application form. Many of these forms include the same requests for information, such as details on previous employment and reasons for leaving previous jobs. Stress that students can prepare for these applications by completing sample job applications and keeping an updated resume or information sheet with them when they are looking for a job.

You might begin preparing for this section by asking several employers for copies of their employment applications. Before having your students practice completing these, discuss the applications with them and show them how to complete various sections. If possible, invite a human resources officer from an employer in the community to speak to your students about how to complete employment applications. When you discuss job applications, you may want to stress the importance of preparing answers to troublesome requests for information. What should students write next to "Salary desired"? What should students write next to "Reason for leaving" if they were fired or laid off from a job? A guest speaker could provide valuable answers to these and other questions. If you would rather not have a guest speaker, or are unable to arrange for one, you might call several professionals in the community and pass their advice on to your students.

You could also mention that an increasing number of companies have electronic employment applications and require applicants to complete the forms on a computer. If your students apply for work at one of these companies, their ability to use computers will give them an advantage over applicants who are not familiar with computers.

One useful class exercise is to compare several different job applications and create a master list of information students may need to provide. Students can then use the master list to create their own information sheets that include such details as dates of employment, addresses and telephone numbers of employers, and addresses and telephone numbers of references so that they will have this information when they fill out job applications.

Program Potential

An increasing number of companies have electronic employment applications. Your students' ability to use computers will give them an advantage.

Writing a Resume

You may also ask students to write a resume and a cover letter. If you do so, provide them with an example of one or more resume formats, such as the one provided on the next page. Have students save their resumes on a disk so that they can update them next year. Stress the importance of updating their resumes with skills, experience, and other information so they will always be ready with a current resume if they need it.

If you can arrange for one or more employers to critique your students' job applications, you might ask that they also consider the students' resumes and cover letters and give the students feedback on these documents as a potential employer. Having employers talk to students about their current employability can be an effective means of impressing upon students the need to improve their skills and continue their education.

Sample Resume

YOUR NAME

1234 First Street
Sunshine, Arizona 82334
(718) 992-8319

Education:
Your High School, Street Address, City, State, Zip Code
Will graduate May 2002
Classes included marketing and desktop publishing.

Special Skills:
Familiar with IBM-Compatible Computers
Bilingual (Spanish and English)
Typing, 30 wpm
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
Self-directed learner

Work Experience:
Pizza Hut, Food Server, August 2000–present
Responsible for maintaining salad bar.

Halfway House, Volunteer, Summer 1999
Helped care for children.

Beverly High School, Student Aide for Della Johnson,
11th-Grade Teacher, January–May 1998

Babysitting for neighbor or family

Hobbies:
Sports
Reading
Hiking

References:
To be furnished on request.

Writing a Cover Letter

Discuss with students some of the strategies for finding open positions. Mention that people find jobs in many ways: through friends, by attending job fairs, through employment agencies, through employers' job lines, on the Internet, and by looking through the classified ads in the local newspaper. Now that students have their work experience and skills in a form they can use, have them look through the classified section of the local newspaper and clip out ads for several jobs they would like to apply for.

The cover letter and job application or resume are all the employer has in order to form a first impression of the student.

Explain that a cover letter is a letter of introduction that is sent to an employer with a job application or resume. A cover letter identifies the position the student is applying for, how he or she learned about the position, and why he or she is an excellent candidate for filling that position. Most important, though, the cover letter and job application or resume are all the employer has in order to form a first impression of the student. If the cover letter and application are not impressive, well written, and free of errors, the student will probably not be called for a job interview.

Another way to impress upon your students the importance of these documents is to have them consider what a well-written, error-free cover letter, job application, and resume might be worth to them. For example, if a cover letter and job application convinced an employer to interview and hire a student for a job paying $18,000 per year and the student held the job for 2 years, then the student's letter and job application would be worth $36,000 to him or her—an impressive amount!

Ask students to write a cover letter for these positions, making sure to tailor it to the job description in the ad. If possible, invite employers to come in and critique the letters, stressing how important it is that business letters be free of errors and follow a recognized format. Students need to understand that if their application materials are poorly written and have errors, they will not be considered for the job.

A sample cover letter is provided on the next page. You may wish to share the employment ad below and the sample letters with your students and explain how the cover letter responds to the ad. A sample business letter is also provided should you wish to distribute a copy of it for your students' use as a reference when they write their cover letters.

CLERK TYPIST II

8 hr. day/12 months, $7.47/hr. Performs a variety of general office work, including typing, filing, maintaining fiscal records, and receptionist duties in support of an SUSD school or department office. Typing and computer skills. Two (2) years of exp. in general office procedures. Minimum typing required: 46 wpm. Apply Sunshine Unified School District, 5000 Washington St., Sunshine, AZ 85555, Mon.–Fri. 7:30 a.m.– 5:30 p.m.

Sample Cover Letter

1234 Orange Grove Drive
Sunshine, AZ 85556

March 12, 2002

Human Resources Manager
Sunshine Unified School District
5000 Washington Street
Sunshine, AZ 85555

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing in regards to your ad for a Clerk Typist II in the March 12, 2002, edition of the *Sunshine Daily Star*, and I am very interested in applying for this position. I am a senior at Sunshine High School and will graduate in June. For the past three years, I have had experience in an office environment because my English for 21st Century Employment class is held in a professional office setting. In that class, students assume the role of professional office workers and the teacher is a manager.

I have excellent interpersonal skills, and I can work well independently or as a team player. In my English for 21st Century Employment class, I used Compaq computers for three years. I type 48 wpm and have good written communications skills. I have two years of experience using Microsoft Word 7.0 and Windows 2000. I have also done some filing and am experienced in the operation of a large copier because I worked in the Xerox room as an aide during one class period.

I am an enthusiastic, fast learner and am hard working and dependable. My attendance record is very good, and I have a positive attitude. I know that I would be an excellent addition to your staff. I am attaching my application. Thank you for considering me for this position. Please contact me at (405) 337-2135 for a personal interview at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Mindy Luna

Sample Business Letter

Your Address (number and Street)
City, State zip code

Date

Name of person to whom you are writing
Company or organization name
Number and Street
City, State zip code

Dear Sir or Madam:

This is one way of formatting a business letter. You can also line up all of the parts of the letter at the left margin. A business letter needs to be businesslike and correctly written. Be sure to say what you mean clearly and concisely using language that shows respect for the reader. In other words, be direct and to the point, but also be polite and avoid using slang or adopting a chatty tone.

The business letter should be free of spelling and punctuation errors. Do not write your name at the top (unless you use letterhead stationery with your name printed on it). Make sure to separate the city and state with a comma and to include the zip code. Be certain to date your letter and put a comma between the day and the year. Either spell out the month or abbreviate it, but do not use numbers for months. The greeting or salutation of your letter should be followed by a colon (Dear Sir or Madam:).

Be sure to include all of the necessary information in your letter. For example, if you ask someone to call you, be sure you have given a telephone number. Finally, remember to sign your name in the space between the closing (Sincerely) and your name.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Literature Component

- Appropriate for all students and adults.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading and evaluating information; communicating information; demonstrating responsibility; maintaining a positive view of self. approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways; listening and responding to verbal and nonverbal communication; relating to familiar and unfamiliar social situations; working with cultural diversity; seeing things in the mind's eye; and locating, understanding, and interpreting written information.

After the students have improved their literacy skills by completing the Basic Reading and the Reading Comprehension segments of your curriculum, they can be introduced to literature that is of high interest and is fairly easy to read. The short story and brief novel would probably be the most effective literary pieces to begin with as you introduce your students to the joys of literature. Your school librarian can help you select books of appropriate levels of difficulty for your students.

You may want to supplement assigned readings from the books required at your school with readings from other books. My students enjoy reading the paperback books published by New Readers Press (P.O. Box 35888, Syracuse, NY 13235-5888). These books include sports stories, mystery and adventure stories, poetry, and love stories that are easy to read and highly interesting. Used book stores can be another source of books for your program. In addition to specific assignments using these books, you may also want to place a folder with book report assignment sheets next to the books. Encourage students to read a book whenever they can and write a book report to pass in for a grade. You may want to require a minimum number of these book reports.

Student Book Publishers Project

In this project, the classroom office becomes the editorial office of a book publishing company. As book reviewers, students are each assigned a book and required to determine whether they think the book should be published in a new edition by your publishing company.

Give students a time schedule that will require them to read for a portion of each class and work on writing their book review and publication recommendation for the remaining portion of the class.

Give each student a copy of the Book Review and Publication Recommendation Guidelines to follow for their reports. You may want to adapt the guidelines on page 180.

Follow-up assignment. Once the reports are completed, you may want to have students use their writing skills to convince the publishing company to act on their recommendations. Tell students that the publishing company can choose only 10 of the many books its reviewers have recommended for publication. As a reviewer, each student's job is to write a persuasive paper to the owner of the company and convince her to select the book the student has recommended. Students should support their arguments with supporting evidence from the book, their knowledge of what their peers enjoy reading, and other convincing reasons.

Students who do not recommend reissuing the books they have read can begin their reports with a brief synopsis of the books and then an explanation of their reasons for not recommending that the publishing company reissue the books. These students could also discuss the topics and types of books they believe should be published. Students should make their recommendations as persuasively as possible and try to convince the publisher to find and publish the types of books they recommend.

Students should make their recommendations as persuasively as possible and try to convince the publisher to find and publish the types of books they recommend.

Extending the project through an essay assignment. You may want your students to elaborate on their book reviews by writing essays that require critical thinking. A few topics are provided below:

- What can you learn from this story that you can apply to your life?

Book Review and Publication Recommendation Guidelines

Our publishing company has been asked to consider publishing a new edition of the book you have been given. As a reviewer, your job is to read the book and write a book review and publication recommendation report that recommends whether the company should publish the book.

Before you read the book, read through the entire sheet of guidelines. As you read the book, think about how you would answer the questions below. Organize your report into the sections listed here.

1. Book Summary

Use the following format for your **title**:

Book Review and Publication Recommendation
for "Book Title"
by Author's Full Name

- Describe the **plot** in one or two paragraphs (what were the main events?) and discuss the following questions: Could this story happen today? Why or why not?
- Describe the main **character(s)** in the book. Is this main character a true-to-life person? Have you ever known anyone like this character? Do you feel that other students your age would be able to relate to this character? Why or why not?
- What is the **theme** of this story? (what is the subject of the story?) Is the theme one that is important in real life today?
- What is the **setting** of this story (where and when does the story take place)?
- What do you feel is the **climax** of the story (the most exciting part)?
- Is there a **conflict** (a struggle between the main character and someone or something else)?

2. Book Review

Review the book's good and bad points by answering some or all of the following questions:

- What is your opinion of this book?
- What did you like or dislike about the book?
- Would you recommend it to other students to read?
- Do you think other students would enjoy this book? Why or why not?
- Does the book have any message or lesson? If so, what is it?

3. Publication Recommendation

Write a final paragraph that discusses your recommendation. You may want to answer some or all of the following questions:

- Would you recommend that our publishing company publish a new edition of this book?
- Do you think that it would be a good idea to publish this book in other languages for students in foreign countries? Why or why not?
- Do you recommend that we produce a videotape version of the book?

- Write a letter to the author of the book and tell him or her what you would have changed if you had written the book. Explain why you would have changed these things.
- If you were the director of the motion picture version of this book, who would you cast in the roles of the characters in the book? Why would you choose these people for these roles?
- How would the movie version differ from the book, and why?

Romeo and Juliet and West Side Story

Once your students are ready for more challenging literature, you will want to select appropriate and appealing works from the required reading list for your department. Your students might enjoy reading the plays *Romeo and Juliet* and *West Side Story*, if they are on the list.

Although you may need to help your students with the language in *Romeo and Juliet*, they should be able to follow the storyline in a movie of this play, which you should consider showing to help them understand the plot. The language in *West Side Story* is easier to understand, as is the more contemporary setting. As you read the plays with your students, you may be surprised by their keen perception of the characters and the aspects of human nature explored in these stories. Your students may develop strong opinions about the actions of the main characters and are likely to express their opinions with enthusiasm in written assignments.

Writing assignments. You may want to follow the reading and discussion of the two plays with a writing assignment. The following two assignments are provided for your consideration:

Comparison and contrast essay. Have your students write an essay comparing and contrasting these two plays. Spend some time with them prewriting, and have them make a list of similarities and differences between the plays. You may also want your students to compile another list of similarities and differences between some or all of the characters of both plays. Then discuss how students might organize the material in their essays.

Creative group story: Modern-day Romeo and Juliet. Assign students to work in small groups to complete this writing assignment. Have them write a present-day version of the story of *Romeo and Juliet.* Have them brainstorm ideas as a prewriting activity. Assign a role to each person in each group. One person might be the recorder, another might be the editor, and the third could be the facilitator who keeps everyone on task.

Poetry and Figures of Speech

The intent of this lesson is merely to expose your students to poetry and the concept of figurative writing. If you choose to incorporate this section, you may want to select several poems from the required reading list for your department. Before you share the poetry with your students, you may find it useful to provide them with a copy of the figures of speech list on the following page and discuss the definition of each term.

You may want to explain the difference between literal and figurative language and why poetry involves both. Then have students work in pairs and learn the definitions of the various figures of speech.

If your students find poetry appealing, ask them to write a poem using one or more figures of speech.

As you read each poem, have your students identify as many figures of speech as they can. You may want to give them a handout with lines from poems that include examples of figures of speech. Students could read through the list and identify the figures of speech.

Although this is not intended to be an in-depth unit on poetry, you may want to extend it if your students find poetry appealing. You might ask students to write a poem using one or more figures of speech, or you may want to develop other activities that will help them identify and remember the figures of speech.

Figures of Speech

Figures of speech are found in speech or writing that is figurative, not literal. In literal language, the words spoken or written are understood to mean what they say. Consider the following example:

He screamed at the umpire.

In this sentence, the fellow actually raised his voice and screamed at an umpire.

In figurative language, the words spoken or written mean something other than the word's literal meaning. This figurative meaning could be an exaggeration or an unusual connection between two things that do not seem to be related at all. Consider the following example:

The headlines screamed, "The War Is Over."

In this sentence, the newspaper headlines did not actually scream, but because the headline was in very large, bold letters, it made as strong an impression on the reader as though it had screamed. Using the word "screamed" in this way is using the figure of speech called "personification," which is defined below.

Figurative language can include the following figures of speech:

alliteration—repetition of initial sounds in two or more words.
Seniors sleeping in school during the second semester sadly see slumping scores and slipping grades.

apostrophe—speaking to an inanimate object as if it were alive or speaking to a person who has died as if he or she were alive.
Come on, car, you've got to start. Oh, Martin Luther King, you should see the problems in this country today.

hyperbole—a vast exaggeration.
His mouth is so big he can whisper into his own ears!

metaphor—a direct comparison of two unlike things.
You are a sly fox. He is an angel.

paradox—An apparently contradictory statement that contains some truth.
Deep down, he's really very shallow.

personification—giving human-like qualities to inanimate or inhuman things.
A little bird told me that you were looking for me.

simile—a comparison of two unlike things that uses the words "like" or "as."
She swims like a fish. His eyes are as bright as stars.

symbol—something that is used to represent something else.
We looked for a bite to eat at the golden arches. (The golden arches are used as a symbol for McDonalds.)

synecdoche—using part of an object to stand for the whole or using the whole object to stand for part of it.
The baby likes its bottle. (The "bottle" stands for the milk and bottle.)

Notes on Fourth Semester

Writing to Enter the World of Work

Job Application

Resume

Cover Letter

Literature Component

Student Book Publishers Project

Romeo and Juliet and *West Side Story*

Poetry and Figures of Speech

Things to Do

Other Ideas

Semester at a Glance

- Continue weekly goal setting.
- Continue literature component.
- Introduce creative writing project and contest.
- Assign an opinion essay.
- Begin cooperative learning writing projects.
- Begin department projects.
- Introduce "Newspaper of the Future" project and contest.
- Introduce self-assessment report.
- Introduce writing for the workplace.
- Introduce career research and preparation activities.
- Begin employability skills portfolios.

Literature Component

As required by your site, you may need to continue incorporating literature into the curriculum. The fourth semester discusses several approaches for presenting books, plays, and poetry to students.

Another way to present literature to your students is to hold a talk show after the class has read a story. Have one student serve as the host or hostess, and choose other students to play the roles of the main characters from the story. Before the talk show begins, tell the entire class which characters from the story will be guests on the talk show, and have each student write an open-ended question for two of the characters. The host or hostess may then begin the talk show by reading several questions from the audience and then inviting the audience to ask questions as well. This can be an exciting way to discuss a story and encourage students to think critically and creatively.

Creative Writing Assignment and Contest

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, demonstrating responsibility, meeting deadlines, applying technology to task, critical thinking skills, creative thinking skills.

On the Cover of a National Magazine

Your students might enjoy imagining themselves featured on the cover of a national magazine and writing an article about themselves that would appear in the magazine as the cover story. In preparation for this assignment, you will want to collect news magazines and have glue and scissors ready. Ask the students if they have looked at the front covers of national news magazines, such as *Time, Newsweek,* and *U.S. News & World Report,* as they stand in the checkout line at a store. Then ask them how they would feel if they saw pictures of themselves on the front covers of these magazines and discovered that they were the subject of the cover story.

What would they want the story to say? What would it be about?

Then tell them that they will have their chance to appear on the front cover of a national news magazine and to write the cover story about themselves. Invite students to remove the covers of the magazines you have collected and design new covers with pictures and titles of their own. Then have them write the cover story they would like to read about themselves in the news magazine and staple a word-processed version of it to the back of the magazine's front cover.

You may want to spend time with them talking about possible topics. Give them a deadline and tell them that there will be special prizes for the most original magazine covers and the best cover stories. Review the basics of writing a news story and a feature story (see pages 147–152).

Try to arrange for gift certificates for CDs and tapes or clothing for prizes for this writing contest. You may want to have other teachers select the winners.

What if your students were on the cover of a magazine? What would they want the cover story to say? What would it be about?

Weekly Essay Writing

Students continue to write weekly essays in the fifth semester. You may want to assign topics from the lists on pages 141–145, from your own topics, or from current events covered in the news media. You may also want to have students broaden their essay-writing skills by assigning the opinion essay.

The Opinion Essay

An opinion essay presents the writer's opinion on a subject or an issue. You may want to tell your students that it is not enough to simply state their opinions in this essay. They also need to provide solid or compelling reasons for their opinions, including facts, statistics, research findings, quotes by experts, and/or actual stories or experiences. For example, if a student writes that all restaurants should prohibit cigarette smoking, his or her essay will be much more persuasive if it includes a discussion of the medical findings on the hazards of secondhand cigarette smoke.

To illustrate the importance of including information or facts to support opinions or claims in an opinion essay, you might also want to write several brief paragraphs that include strong statements of opinion with absolutely nothing to support them. One paragraph, for example, might promote the idea that segregating girls and boys in academic classes results in greater academic achievement. After reading this paragraph, ask the students if they believe this is an effective, convincing paragraph from an opinion essay. If not, why not? What would they add to the paragraph to make it more convincing?

Organizing the opinion essay. You can tell students that one way to organize an opinion essay is to make a statement about the topic at the beginning of the essay; state your opinion on that topic; present reasons, facts, or statistics to substantiate your opinion; and then add a conclusion that restates your opinion.

Possible Topics for an Opinion Essay

Dress for Success Program

Tell students about the Dress for Success programs described in chapter 2. How would they like such a program at their school? Do they think it would work? Would they like to participate in it?

Truancy

Poor school attendance is a major problem. In an attempt to solve this problem, some states have passed laws making truancy a misdemeanor punishable by fining parents of chronic truants up to $500 and sending the parents to jail for 30 days. Some schools require parents to attend classes with their truant students. This is having an effect on reducing the number of students who skip classes or entire school days. What do students think about these laws and policies? Would they discourage them from being truant or skipping classes? How would they solve the problem?

In or Out?

Alternative schools for students who are having a difficult time in the public schools have become very popular in some communities. People who are in favor of this idea say that students in the alternative schools receive more individualized attention and have a better chance to succeed. At the same time, the students in the public schools are not disrupted by these students. Opponents say that this is a bad idea because it results in segregation by ethnicity, gender, ability, or other characteristics. What do your students think?

Television Violence

Do acts of violence portrayed on television have a harmful effect on young people? If you were a parent, would you monitor your children's television viewing? What do you think of the V-chip, which allows parents to block out certain programs? Explain the reasons behind your answers.

Cooperative Learning Writing Projects

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, interpreting and communicating information, acquiring and evaluating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, interpersonal skills, critical thinking skills, understanding social systems, working with cultural diversity, negotiating to arrive at a decision, participating as a member of a team, allocating human resources, exercising leadership, relating in familiar and unfamiliar social situations.

School of the Future Project

In this cooperative learning project, students will work in groups of four to plan a high school of the year 2102. Assign roles to the students in each group, choosing a facilitator who will keep everyone on task and contribute ideas, two writers who will write and type the report, and one illustrator/artist who will make the pictures and graphics for the report. Each member of the group will be responsible for writing one section of the report. The two group writers will incorporate these sections into one document and prepare the final report. Each group will prepare a written and oral report on the school of the future. The report can include the elements listed on the following page.

This project can be adapted for adult students by changing the topic to the workplace of the future, the house of the future, or the automobile of the future, etc. Draw on the interests of the members of the class when you select the topic.

Department Projects

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, interpreting and communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, interpersonal skills, critical thinking skills, seeing things in the mind's eye, knowing how to learn, participating as a member of a team, matching technology to task, monitoring and correcting performance.

Once the students are comfortable with cooperative learning, try dividing them into departments and giving each department (group) a project to complete. Two possible projects are described below.

Human Resources Department hires new teacher. Designate one department as the Human Resources Department and give those students resumes for fictitious applicants for a new teacher's position. Have them agree on the top five criteria for selection of a candidate, discuss the resumes, select the top three, and then narrow it down to the one they think is the best candidate. Have the students write a business letter notifying the candidate that he or she has been selected for the position. Also have them write business letters notifying the other candidates that they have not been selected and thanking them for applying for the position. You may want to have the department write a short report on why they chose the one candidate and did not choose the others.

"School of the Future" Project

Your group will prepare a written and an oral report on your vision of what school will be like in the year 2102. Be sure to include the following elements in your report:

1. **Cover page.** Include the title of your report, names of the people in your group, and the date.
2. **Learning outcomes.** List the 10 learning outcomes that you would want graduates of your high school to have. These should include the skills and knowledge that you feel will be important for a person to succeed in the year 2102.
3. **Design.** Design a high school that will help its students achieve the 10 learning outcomes. Be creative—your school need not look at all like the typical school of today. It could be circular. It could be located underwater or on a space station. It could be in a shopping mall or large office complex. It could be powered by solar energy. You could also build a model of the school or draw a sketch of it.
4. **Courses.** What kind of courses will be taught at your school? You do not need to list every course, but you should explain what types of courses your school will offer. Mention any particular area of emphasis that your school will have, such as oceanography, space studies, agriculture, computer technology, or ecology.
5. **The school day.** Will the schedule of classes be the same as it is in most high schools today (from 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.)? Or will it be entirely different? For example, school might be open from 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., with two or three separate sessions of students.
6. **Unique features.** Will your school have any special or unique features? For example, your school might have robotics labs, a planetarium and observatory for astronomy research, a recycling center, a teen court, a large aquarium for marine biology studies, a gourmet restaurant, a day-care center, or a virtual reality lab.
7. **Students.** What kind of student population will your school serve?

Public Relations Department plans awards ceremony. Designate another department as the Public Relations Department and have them plan the annual awards ceremony for the literacy program. You may wish to have them focus on deciding the order of events of the ceremony or you may also have them make phone calls to inquire about rental of function rooms, refreshments, flowers, etc. This project can be as extensive or as limited as you wish. I have even assigned students to write a script and produce a 6-minute videotape portrait of the awards ceremony.

The Newspaper of the Future

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, interpreting and communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, critical thinking skills, approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways, participating as a member of a team, allocating time to improve performance, seeing things in the mind's eye, exercising leadership.

Divide the students into cooperative learning groups and assign them to create a newspaper that might appear 100 years from now. It can be composed mainly of news stories, but might also include editorials, sports stories, and feature articles. You may want to review the basics of writing these stories with your students (see pages 146–154).

Provide the students with large white poster-size pieces of paper (a large drawing pad would work). You may be able to obtain the paper from the art teacher if your school has one. Students should use the word-processing program to write the articles. When the articles have been revised, students can then print them in column format and cut and paste them onto the large sheets of paper.

Assign each person in the group a role. There might be a news editor, a sports and features editor, and a managing editor or facilitator who is responsible for making sure the project is completed.

Contest. You may want to have this project be a contest that will reward the groups that create the best three newspapers with gift certificates or other items donated by local businesses.

An individual option. If you prefer, have the students work on the project as individual newspaper publishers. You may want to give students the option of using regular typing sheets of paper for their newspapers.

A reminder to read. Be sure to stress the importance of reading the news daily and of being informed citizens. You may want to have students write briefly about current events either daily or three times per week.

Creating an Office Newsletter

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, interpreting and communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, critical thinking skills, approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways, participating as a member of a team, allocating time to improve performance, seeing things in the mind's eye, exercising leadership.

Another interesting writing assignment is to have your students create a monthly office newsletter for all of the students in your program. You might want to divide the class into departments of three students each and then have them write the news for that particular department. For example, the Sports Department would write sports stories, etc. Each month the departments should change roles so students experience writing each type of story for the newsletter.

You may wish to have a contest for the newsletter name and for artwork for the newsletter logo.

An office newsletter written by your students is excellent documentation of their writing skills. If people ask for information on the program, you may wish to include a copy of the newsletter along with an annual report or any other information. The newsletter can be an effective public relations tool for your program and can also be used to encourage new students who may be frustrated and feeling inadequate about their own skill deficiencies. You can show these students a copy of the newsletter and tell them that it was written by students who started the program with writing skills just like theirs.

Also, if you are able to contact other English for 21st Century Employment teachers, find out it they have office newsletters and arrange for a monthly newsletter exchange. Assign one of your departments the responsibility of mailing copies of the program's newsletter to the other programs each month. You can use this opportunity to show students how to add and maintain an address file on the computer and how to print out address labels. Also assign a department the responsibility of writing an Exchange News column for the newsletter each month.

Program Potential

Self-assessment reports give students a reality check and help them assess where they stand in earning credits, grades, and planning for life after graduation.

Self-Assessment Report

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, allocating time to improve performance, monitoring and correcting performance.

Having students complete self-assessment reports gives them an opportunity to take charge of their own progress and assume responsibility for correcting or improving any areas or habits that need work. The reports also give students a reality check and help them assess where they stand in earning credits, grades, and planning for life after graduation. See directions for writing a Self-Assessment Report on the following page. You may also want to assign the self-assessment report early in the second semester. Although it is geared mainly for seniors who will be graduating, other students would also benefit from this assignment with a few adjustments to the last section.

Self-Assessment Report

Write a report assessing how well you are doing. Please divide the report into sections and include these subheadings in bold print on your paper. Write the report in paragraph form and include the following information.

Current Academic Status

What is your current GPA (grade point average)? How many credits have you completed so far? How many more credits do you need to graduate? Will you earn those credits this semester? When will you graduate? Are you in danger of failing any classes right now? If so, what are you going to do to make sure that you do not fail those classes?

Responsibility Assessment

How many absences have you had this semester? How many of those were excused? Have you skipped any classes this semester? How many times have you been tardy to class this semester? Do you wake up for school on your own or do you rely on someone to wake you up? If you have several absences or tardies, what are you going to do to prevent that from continuing? How well do you think you are doing at taking responsibility for meeting all of your obligations and requirements for graduation and for reaching your goal beyond graduation? Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not responsible at all and 5 being very responsible. Explain why you chose the particular rating you did.

Goals and Future Plans

What are your career goals beyond graduation? What have you done to ensure that you reach your goals? Are you applying to the community college or any other school? Have you completed the applications for admission? Are you going to apply for financial aid? Have you completed those forms yet? Have you investigated job possibilities? Have you asked your mentor for assistance with any of these tasks? Has your mentor worked with you on any of these tasks?

Writing for the Workplace

This section covers writing telephone messages, memos, and business letters. Students should understand that this kind of writing for the workplace must follow the proper format and contain correct and complete information. Because these documents can determine your students' future opportunities, you may want to remind them that the documents need to be as perfect as possible. Stress that you will not accept any errors in these documents, even if it means that the students have to edit and revise them several times before turning in the final drafts.

Writing Telephone Messages

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: writing, listening, communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, monitoring and correcting performance.

If your office classroom has a telephone, teach your students to use proper telephone etiquette and to take accurate and clear telephone messages. One way to do this is to assign each student telephone duty on a different day and have that student be responsible for all telephone messages on that day. Then review the written messages with the student at the end of the class. Identify any errors in the written messages and show the student how he or she could have written the messages correctly. You may want to have students practice on a disconnected phone before assigning them telephone duty.

Writing Memos

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways, allocating time to improve performance, monitoring and correcting performance, initiating problem-solving techniques.

One of the simplest business documents to assign for students to write is a memo (see page 200 for a business memo assignment). You may want to remind them that memos should be brief, direct, and to the point. Provide them with a sample memo (page 202), and ask them to follow the format in the sample. Also stress the importance of editing a draft of their memos and making sure there are no spelling or grammatical errors. You may want to mention that an error in the text of a memo could cost a company millions of dollars or could cause havoc in day-to-day operations if employees were given incorrect information.

An error in the text of a memo could cost a company millions of dollars or could cause havoc in day-to-day operations.

Tell the students that you will not accept errors in their memos. They must proofread them before passing them in and correct any errors they find. Several sample memo assignments are provided on the following pages.

Writing Business Letters

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways, allocating time to improve performance, monitoring and correcting performance, initiating problem-solving techniques, negotiating to arrive at a decision.

Before giving students the assignment for writing business letters, you may want to hand out copies of the sample business letter and discuss the format, spacing, punctuation, and parts of the business letter. You might also mention common errors and caution students to avoid them. These include omitting the date, using a comma instead of a colon in the salutation, forgetting to include a comma between the city and state in the addresses, and writing in a way that is too informal or familiar. Then have your students complete the assignment for writing several business letters on pages 203–204, using the sample business letter provided on page 205.

Writing Business Memos

Write a memo that responds to one of the situations below. The memo should be clear and to the point and should be free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. Be sure to include a date.

1. You are a manager of the electronics department of a large department store. One of the employees in your department, Eddie Marsh, has been late to work on several occasions in the past month. In addition, Eddie often plays with the computers and electronic games and other merchandise for sale in your department, and even ignores customers at times. Annoyed customers frequently complain to you that they have had to wait a long time for assistance while they watched Eddie play with the merchandise and ignore them. You have spoken to Eddie about these problems three times already, but he has ignored your comments. When you discuss the problem with your boss, Joe Garcia, he asks you to write him a memo summarizing the situation. Write a memo to Joe Garcia about the problems you are having with Eddie Marsh.

2. You work in the produce department of a supermarket. You have noticed that several of the customers have a very difficult time opening the plastic bags that come on rolls for bagging fresh fruits and vegetables. The bags stick together, and several frustrated customers have complained to you about them. Customers are irritated and annoyed that it can take them several minutes to get the end of the bag opened. Some of them have told you that they would have purchased more fruits or vegetables, but did not want to be frustrated by trying to open any additional bags. Write a memo to the produce department manager, Maria Cortez, bringing this problem to her attention and suggesting one or more possible solutions to the problem.

3. You are a department head in a telephone office. Due to the heavy volume of phone calls anticipated during the holidays, your operators will need to work some overtime. If they work more than 35 hours during the holiday week, the company will pay time and a half. If the extra hours are on a Sunday or a holiday, the company will pay double time. The rule is that the maximum number of overtime hours an employee can accumulate per week is 10 hours. Employees should use a special blue Overtime Hours Form to list their hours. These forms must be handed in to the payroll clerk by Wednesday of each week. Write a memo to the telephone operators to let them know this information.

4. You are in charge of a new recycling program for your company. Employees will be asked to recycle pop-top soft drink cans, paper, bottles, and cardboard. These items will be placed into labeled recycling bins located in the cafeteria. Write a memo to office employees informing them of the recycling program and giving details regarding where these items must be placed. Employees should know how to handle their recyclable material: Cans should be crushed, bottles should be washed, and magazines should not be placed in the paper bins. Try to make your memo persuasive so that employees will want to participate in the recycling program.

5. You are the office manager for your company. Employee tardiness has become so widespread that it is costing the company both time and money. Write a memo to all employees regarding this serious problem. State what consequences employees will face for tardiness. Make it clear that repeated tardiness will not be tolerated by the management. You may also include an incentive for employees who show up on time. For example, you might reward employees who have no tardies in a three-month period by allowing them to leave an hour early every Friday for a month.

Sample Business Memo

MEMO

DATE: March 3, 2002
TO: All Employees
FROM: Joan Waller, Office Manager
SUBJECT: New lab furniture and computer equipment

Our office has recently purchased new computer workstations, office chairs, computers, and printers. All employees are expected to take proper care of these items. If you notice any loose screws or bolts in your chairs, please notify me immediately so that we may tighten them. Also, when leaving the office, please push your chairs under your workstations. By sharing responsibility for the care of this new furniture and equipment, we can ensure that our office will be a pleasant, comfortable place to work. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Writing Business Letters

Write a business letter for one of the situations described below. Be sure to follow the correct format for a business letter and to proofread and correct your errors in grammar, spelling, and sentence structure. Business letters should be written clearly and should be direct and to the point. The tone should be businesslike, not conversational.

1. You are the manager of customer service for a large department store. You have just purchased new office furniture for your department. One month after the furniture is delivered, you notice that some of the fabric on the chairs is becoming faded and frayed. Write a letter to the Awesome Office Furniture Company, 1256 East State Street, Templeton, AZ 85799, stating your dissatisfaction with their office furniture and requesting that they correct this problem.

2. You are working in a real estate office and need to hire a receptionist. You have reviewed all of the applications for the position and have decided to send letters to three of the applicants asking them to come in for personal interviews. Write a letter to one of these candidates, telling him that he is being considered for the position of receptionist. Ask that he call your office to make an appointment for a personal interview. You may make up the name and address of your company and of the applicant.

3. You work in the computer department of a discount office supply store. The company is offering cash awards for employee suggestions for ways to save money, make the store more appealing to customers, and increase sales. Write a letter to the store manager making suggestions for accomplishing these things in the store and in your department. Address the letter to Ms. Jayne Wellman, Manager, Quality Office Supply, 9999 East Broadway Boulevard, Sunshine, FL 36431.

4. You are the manager of a pizza restaurant and have received a letter from an English for 21st Century Employment program volunteer asking your restaurant to donate gift certificates to be used as awards at the annual awards ceremony for the students in the program. Respond to the letter, indicating whether you will donate the certificates and, if so, how many will be donated. You may also decline to donate the certificates. You may make up the names and addresses for this letter.

5. You are a successful person in your career of choice and have received a letter from an English for 21st Century Employment program asking you to serve as a guest speaker for Career Month and to allow a student to spend a day shadowing you on the job. You feel that education and young people are extremely important, and you want to help your community. However, you are very busy at this time of the year. Taking time to participate could cause you to fall behind in your workload. Decide whether you will be able to participate in the Career Month activities, and write a letter in response. You may address this letter to your manager (teacher).

Sample Business Letter

Your Address (number and Street)
City, State zip code

Date

Name of person to whom you are writing
Company or organization name
Number and Street
City, State zip code

Dear Sir or Madam:

This is one way of formatting a business letter. You can also line up all of the parts of the letter at the left margin. A business letter needs to be businesslike and correctly written. Be sure to say what you mean clearly and concisely, using language that shows respect for the reader. In other words, be direct and to the point, but also be polite and avoid using slang or adopting a chatty tone.

The business letter should be free of spelling and punctuation errors. Do not write your name at the top (unless you use letterhead stationery with your name printed on it). Make sure to separate the city and state with a comma and to include the zip code. Be certain to date your letter and put a comma between the day and the year. Either spell out the month or abbreviate it, but do not use numbers for months. The greeting or salutation of your letter should be followed by a colon (Dear Sir or Madam:).

Be sure to include all of the necessary information in your letter. For example, if you ask someone to call you, be sure you have given your telephone number. Finally, remember to sign your name in the space below between the closing (Sincerely) and your name.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Career Research and Preparation

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways, allocating time to improve performance, monitoring and correcting performance, using computers to process information.

Career Research Project

The career research project will help the student begin to chart a path toward launching his or her career. If you have implemented a mentoring program (see chapter 5), you can pair interested students with adult mentors who are working in careers of interest to the students. The career research project assignment is discussed in detail on page 208.

Information sources. There are many excellent information sources that students can use for their career research projects. A good way for them to start is by talking to their mentors. If a mentor is not in the career that his or her student is researching, then the mentor may know someone who is and may arrange for the student to interview someone in the career of interest to him or her.

School resources. In addition, if your school has a career center, have your students look for information there and in the school library. There are also several good software packages on careers. If you do not have any of these and are unable to purchase one, ask your counseling office if they have one. The *Choices* program provides detailed information on thousands of careers and includes information on career preparation, college programs, scholarships, job opportunities, salaries, etc.

Career shadowing. This is a good time to try to arrange for students to shadow someone who works in a career of interest to them. If the student's mentor is not in a career of interest to the student, the mentor may try to arrange for the student to spend a morning or afternoon job shadowing a person in the student's chosen career. The job shadowing experience also gives your students the opportunity to interview someone in their career or interest and incorporate what they learn into their career research project report.

The Internet. Many Internet sites also provide very comprehensive information on careers, employment opportunities, etc. You may want to have your students explore the following sites:

Career exploration links sponsored by the University of California at Berkeley
(www.uhs.berkeley.edu/StudentsCareerLibrary/careerme.htm)
This page, sponsored by the University of California at Berkeley, guides students through decisions about careers by providing an interest assessment and over 800 links to other career-related sites. The links provide specific information on a wide variety of career options and professional fields.

Careers.Org
(www.careers.org)
This is a comprehensive career research and job-hunting site organized by topic that includes regional resources, expert job advice, career articles, and thousands of links to the best career resources on the Internet.

JobWeb
(www.jobweb.org/catapult/choice.htm)
This web site is owned and maintained by the National Association of Colleges and Employers and includes online career fairs, employer information, career development, job market research, and salary information.

Career Research Project

Name ______________________________ Due date ______________________________

Select a career that interests you and learn more about it by finding the information requested below. You may interview someone in this career or you may find information on Web sites for career information (Choices, Bridges), in the library, or from many other sources. Remember to list your sources of information at the end of your report.

Your report should be in paragraph form and should include the following information:

Preparation and Training

What preparation or training is required for this career? Is a college degree required? If so, what type of degree is required? If not, is there a training program you must complete or a certificate you must earn? How much time beyond high school graduation is required to prepare for this career? Where can you receive the type of training you will need for this career? What is the approximate cost of the training or preparation for this career? Can you receive the training where you live or must you go elsewhere?

Responsibilities

What is a day in this career like? What does the career involve? What hours does someone in this career work? Would you work with people or alone? Would you work with computers or with any other equipment? What skills would you use in this career? Does the career involve travel? Is the job the same each day or is it always changing? Would you have to work shifts? Will you need to return to school to keep up on new developments in your career? Does this career require written communications skills? Will it be important or helpful to be bilingual in this career?

Employment Prospects

What are the employment opportunities in this career? Will there be more jobs or fewer jobs in the future? Are more jobs available in certain geographic areas? What is the average pay for someone in this career this year? Is your location a good place to find a job in this career?

Advantages and Disadvantages

What are the positive and negative aspects of this career? Are there any health restrictions for this career?

Sources of Information

List the sources of information you used to research your career and write this report.

Employability Skills Portfolio Project

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: reading, writing, communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways, allocating time to improve performance, monitoring and correcting performance, initiating problem-solving techniques, negotiating to arrive at a decision.

Employment experts predict that today's students may change careers as many as seven times during their lives. Each time they change jobs or careers, they will need to use resumes, applications, samples of their work, and letters of recommendation to document their skills and qualifications. The employability skills portfolio provides students with a written profile of their achievements and successes, including academic, personal management, interpersonal skills, and samples of their work—especially their written work. It also includes letters of recommendation and any certificates or awards they have received. The portfolio also helps students identify any gaps in skills.

The employability skills portfolio project requires students to create and maintain their own portfolios. The project can be extended by inviting employers to come to school and "interview" the students by reviewing their portfolios and assessing whether the students would be qualified for jobs with their companies or are on the right track to launching their desired careers.

Employers are asked to give students suggestions and recommendations for improving their skills and the documentation of those skills in the portfolios. They are also asked to evaluate the portfolios, indicating areas of strengths and weaknesses, and to evaluate the students' personal appearance and interpersonal skills.

Program Potential

The employability skills portfolio provides students with a written profile of their achievements and successes. It also helps students identify any gaps in skills.

Employability Skills Portfolio

This portfolio reflects your skills and qualifications for employment in the future. You will be presenting your portfolio to an employer from the community during a mock job interview and eventually during real job interviews.

It is extremely important that everything you include in your portfolio be well written. You will be required to proofread your papers carefully and asked to revise them until they are perfect. This is because employers do not expect to find errors on the items in your portfolio. They expect that your writing will be neatly and carefully done. Remember that the competition you will face in the employment world will be fierce, and you must strive for excellence in order to compete.

Name____

Portfolio is due on __________________________________

Employability Skills Portfolio

Your employability skills portfolio should include the following items:

1. **Business letter of introduction.** Include a statement of your personal career goals and state what sets you apart from other applicants (see the sample business letter format on page 212).
2. **Your personal resume.** (See the sample resume on page 213 for an acceptable format).
3. **Employability skills profile.** Include a list of your academic skills, interpersonal skills, and personal management skills.
4. **Writing samples.** Include a demonstration of your written communications skills. Include your career research paper, a descriptive essay (one that describes something with specific details), a position paper (one that gives your position on an issue), and two other essays that represent your best work.
5. **Samples of your work to demonstrate your skills in whatever career you select.** For example, include an accounting spreadsheet that you did, some artwork you made in the CADD lab, or a design for a house that you made. If you cannot include samples of your work, then include a description of your skills and experience or training you have had that qualifies you for this career.
6. **Awards, certificates, or letters of recommendation.** Include any honors you have received that are relevant to your career. Also include two letters of recommendation from employers, counselors, teachers, or coaches (not from friends or relatives).

Sample Business Letter

Your Address (number and street)
City, State zip code

Date

Name of person to whom you are writing
Company or organization name
Number and Street
City, State zip code

Dear Sir or Madam:

This is how a business letter should be set up. It is also correct to line up all of the parts of the letter at the left margin. The important thing is to be sure to follow the correct format for a business letter. A business letter is a business document and must be businesslike and correctly written. Be sure to say what you mean clearly and concisely. In other words, be direct and to the point. A business letter should not be written in a chatty, conversational tone. It should be businesslike and formal, but clearly understood.

Be sure to use correct spelling and punctuation. Do not write your name at the top (unless you have letterhead stationery with your name printed on it). Make sure to separate the city and state with a comma and to include your zip code. Be certain to date your letter and put a comma between the day and the year. Spell out the month or abbreviate it, but don't use numbers for months. A colon and not a comma should follow the greeting or salutation of your letter.

Be sure to include all of the necessary information in your letter. For example, if you ask someone to call you, be sure you have given a telephone number. Finally, be sure to write the word *sincerely* in the correct space and spell it correctly. Four spaces below that word, type your name. Print out your letter and then sign your name in the space between the word *sincerely* and your name. Learning to write a good business letter correctly is one of the most important and useful things you will learn in school. Learn it well.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Type your name here.

Sample Resume

YOUR NAME

1234 Success Street
Tuscon, Arizona 85716
(520) Telephone Number
e-mail address, if you have one

Education:

Sunnyvale High School
Sunshine, AZ
Will graduate (give year)
Specialized courses included:
    English for the 21st Century Workplace
    Business Technology

Special Skills:

Computer Skills: Word Processing, Desktop Publishing, CADD, Spreadsheets, Databases (list the programs you are able to use)
Bilingual (list the languages you speak)
Excellent communication skills
Excellent interpersonal skills
Self-directed learner

Work Experience:

(List most recent jobs or volunteer work first and work backward.)
Employer, Job Title, dates you worked there
Volunteer Work

Special Interests and Activities:

Sports (list which ones)
Hiking
Reading

References:

To be furnished on request.

Go through the list of SCANS skills on the next page and check off all the skills that you have. Now type those skills under the correct categories below. Some examples are provided.

Your Name____

Employability Skills Profile

Academic Skills:

Has excellent written communication skills

Is able to read and understand written materials

Possesses research and library skills

Interpersonal Skills:

Actively listens to others

Actively participates in groups

Teaches others

Personal-Management Skills:

Meets schoolwork deadlines

Pays attention to details

Follows oral and written directions

SCANS Skills

- ☐ Acquires and evaluates information
- ☐ Allocates human resources
- ☐ Allocates material and facility resources
- ☐ Allocates time to improve performance
- ☐ Applies technology to task
- ☐ Approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques
- ☐ Approaches thoughts and solutions in new ways
- ☐ Budgets money
- ☐ Communicates information in writing
- ☐ Demonstrates responsibility
- ☐ Develops a decision-making plan
- ☐ Develops a self-management plan
- ☐ Exercises leadership
- ☐ Exhibits ethics in decision making
- ☐ Improves and designs systems
- ☐ Initiates problem-solving techniques
- ☐ Interprets and communicates information
- ☐ Knows how to learn
- ☐ Listens and responds to verbal and nonverbal communications
- ☐ Locates, understands, and interprets written information
- ☐ Maintains and troubleshoots technology
- ☐ Maintains a positive view of self
- ☐ Matches technology to task
- ☐ Monitors and corrects performance
- ☐ Negotiates to arrive at a decision
- ☐ Organizes and maintains information
- ☐ Organizes oral communications
- ☐ Participates as a member of a team
- ☐ Performs basic computations
- ☐ Relates in familiar and unfamiliar social situations
- ☐ Sees things in the mind's eye
- ☐ Serves clients and customers
- ☐ Teaches others
- ☐ Understands social, organizational, and technological systems
- ☐ Understands systems
- ☐ Uses computers to process information
- ☐ Uses reasoning
- ☐ Works with cultural diversity

Notes on Fifth Semester

Literature Component

Creative Writing Assignment and Contest

On the Cover of a National Magazine

Weekly Essay Writing

The Opinion Essay

Cooperative Learning Writing Projects

School of the Future Project

Department Projects

The Newspaper of the Future

Creating an Office Newsletter

Self-Assessment Report

Writing for the Workplace

Writing Telephone Messages

Writing Memos

Writing Business Letters

Career Research and Preparation

Career Research Project

Employability Skills Portfolio Project

Things to Do

Other Ideas

6th

Semester at a Glance

- Continue weekly goal setting.
- Continue weekly essay writing.
- Hold mock job interviews.
- Introduce research project.
- Introduce "The Internet and You" assignment.
- Begin using software with research projects from the real world.
- Introduce critical thinking activities.
- Begin preparation for life after graduation.

Program Potential

Mock job interviews will provide your students with valuable feedback on their portfolios and an opportunity to practice their interview skills.

Mock Job Interviews

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: communicating information, demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways, allocating time to improve performance, monitoring and correcting performance, listening and responding to verbal and nonverbal communication, relating to familiar and unfamiliar social situations.

After your students have prepared their employability skills portfolios, you may want to arrange for them to participate in mock job interviews so they can get feedback on their portfolios and practice their interview skills. If you choose to do this, tell your students that they will be presenting their portfolios to employers during mock job interviews. You can start enlisting potential interviewers by asking the employers participating in your mentoring program if they would be willing to help with this project. A sample business letter inviting businesses and organizations to participate in mock job interviews is provided on page 224 for your use.

Invite each employer to send you two or three actual job descriptions and three or four applications for each one. Then make a chart on poster-sized paper listing each of these jobs with three "interview" times below each job. Post the chart in your room, and have each senior sign up for two positions. Then ask students to complete a job application and a cover letter for each of the two positions. The student will give the application to the employer at the beginning of the interview.

Plan to have each interviewer interview three students. If possible, reserve the school library for the interviews with the employers. You may want to create an evaluation form for the employers to use when they evaluate your students. You might simply ask them to score each student on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being the lowest) in each of these areas: portfolio contents, employability skills, personal appearance, interpersonal skills demonstrated in the interview, and overall rating. Then provide a space for their comments. A sample interview evaluation form is provided on page 225.

Before the interviews, make nameplates for each employer so that the students will be able to find their interviewers. Discuss how students should dress for the interviews and show them how to approach an interviewer, introduce themselves, shake hands, and present their portfolios. You may also want to discuss some of the dos and don'ts of interviews with them and talk to your students about the importance of sitting up straight, making eye contact with the interviewer, and smiling. Job interview tips are provided on page 226. Remind students to thank the employer for the interview and to shake hands at the end of the interview.

You may also want to have the students return their portfolios to you after the interviews so that you can keep them in the classroom. Just before they complete the program, return their portfolios to them and ask them to update their resumes, employability skills lists, and the business letter. Stress the importance of keeping their resumes up to date throughout their careers.

Sample Invitation Letter

Today's Date

Employer's Name
Employer's Street Address
City, State zip code

Dear [insert name]:

Thank you for your commitment to helping students experience success in the workplace through the 21st Century Workplace program. I invite you to consider helping these students in an important activity. On (date) from (time range), our students will participate in mock job interviews in (place). Last year several local area employers, including your organization, participated in conducting these interviews and evaluating our students' performances. I hope you will consider participating again this year.

If you would like to participate, please send me two to four job descriptions for positions in your organization and three job applications for each position you send. If possible, these should be positions that high school students or graduates could apply for, but they may also be positions that would require a college degree. The students will look at all of the job descriptions we receive from the various employers and each will "apply" for two positions. There will be no more than three students applying for any one position.

I will be in touch with you prior to (date) to finalize the arrangements, but you should plan to bring an interviewer for each job description you provide. Each interviewer will interview either two or three students for 20 minutes each. They will then be asked to complete a brief questionnaire rating each student on several criteria.

Your participation in this endeavor is much appreciated and will give our students valuable experience for actual job interviews.

I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Mock Job Interview Evaluation Form

Interviewer________________________________ Date ________________________

Student's Name ____

Please rate the student's performance on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = unacceptable, 5 = excellent) in the following areas:

Portfolio ________

Comments: ____

____

Professional Appearance ________

Comments: ____

____

Cover Letter and Job Application ________

Comments: ____

____

Overall Performance in Interview ________

Comments: ____

____

Additional Comments:____

____

____

____

____

____

____

Job Interview Tips

Preparation

- Learn about the organization.
- Have a specific job or jobs in mind.
- Review your qualifications for the job.
- Review your resume.
- Practice an interview with a friend or a relative.
- Arrive before the scheduled time of your interview.

Personal Appearance

- Be well groomed.
- Dress appropriately.
- Do not chew gum.

The Interview

- Answer each question concisely.
- Respond promptly.
- Use good manners. Learn the name of your interviewer and shake hands as you meet.
- Use proper English and avoid slang.
- Be cooperative and enthusiastic.
- Ask questions about the position and the organization.
- Thank the interviewer, and follow up with a letter.

Test (if employer gives one)

- Listen closely to instructions.
- Read each question carefully.
- Write legibly and clearly.
- Budget your time wisely and don't dwell on one question.

Information to Bring to an Interview

- Social Security number.
- Driver's license number.
- Resume. Although not all employers require applicants to bring a resume, you should be able to furnish the interviewer with information about your education, training, and previous employment.
- References. An employer usually requires three references. Get permission from people before using their names, and make sure they will give you a good reference. Do not use relatives. For each reference, provide the following information: name, address, telephone number, and job title.

—*Occupational Outlook Handbook,* 1996–97 Edition
(United States Department of Labor, 1996)

Research Skills

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: applying technology to task; acquiring and evaluating information; organizing information; communicating information; knowing how to learn; demonstrating responsibility; maintaining a positive view of self; approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways; listening and responding to verbal and nonverbal communication; relating to familiar and unfamiliar social situations; working with cultural diversity; seeing things in the mind's eye; locating, understanding, and interpreting written information.

The research project will be challenging for your students, but it is important for students who plan to continue their education at the community college level or who plan to pursue a career in business. This is the information age; 21st century workers need to be able to find, apply, write about, and document the information they need to do their jobs. You can help your students develop these skills by assigning a research project report.

The goal of this project is to help students with poor literacy skills understand that research involves exploring various sources, finding information on a particular topic, presenting that information in an organized way in the student's own words, and documenting the sources of information with a bibliography and internal notations within the text of the paper.

Research Project Reports

Have students use Microsoft Bookshelf or Encarta, the Internet, and/or the library to research topics they will select from a list you provide. These may include careers, medical topics, robotics, the Wright brothers' first flight, or any other topics you select. You will want to determine the length and format of the research reports.

Research Project Topic Categories

- *Computer technology*
- *Current events in the news*
- *Education in the United States*
- *Environmental issues*
- *Medical advances or discoveries*
- *Scientific advances*
- *Social issues (drugs, gangs, violence)*
- *Space exploration*

Consider requiring students to use at least three current sources, such as periodicals, magazines, newspapers, and interviews with people who have specialized knowledge on the topic. You may simply want to show them how to locate information and how to paraphrase it in written form, or you may wish to require them to provide internal documentation and a bibliography. You might show them how to use the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* to locate articles in magazines and periodicals. Then show them how to take notes, organize their information into a logical order, and write it in report form with documented sources and a bibliography. Some students might benefit from examining successful research papers written by other students in previous years. Chances are your classroom, school library, or school computer lab has access to the Internet. Look ahead to the Internet section of this curriculum outline and familiarize your students with how to search for information on the Internet (see pages 234–237).

If your students use the Internet for researching their topics, you may want to check the latest *MLA Handbook* from the Modern Language Association for guidelines on citing online sources.

Before the students begin researching, ask them to complete a brief questionnaire that will help them focus their topic. The questionnaire might include the following questions:

What is the topic of your research paper?

Why are you interested in this topic?

What are three questions you would like to answer by researching this topic?

What do you hope to have learned when you complete the research project?

The following pages include a sample cover sheet and a page of text with internal documentation and a bibliography. You may want to use them as handouts for your students.

Research Paper

This project will familiarize you with how to research a topic, put the information into your own words, and incorporate the data you find from various sources into one coherent, well-organized report that presents the information in a logical manner and gives credit to the sources of that information.

You must use at least three sources. Use only sources that have up-to-date information, such as the Internet, magazines, newspapers, and interviews with people involved with your topic.

Select a topic to research from one of these categories:

Medical advances or discoveries
- The effects of cigarette smoke on the body
- Recent advances in the fight against AIDS

Environmental issues
- Recent evidence for global warming
- Effects of logging in the Amazon rain forest

Social issues
- Efforts to address illegal immigration
- The status of the war on drugs

Scientific advances
- Recent research on alternative fuels
- Advances in designing artificial hearts

Space exploration
- The latest space shuttle mission
- Recent developments in the search for life on other planets

New computer technology
- Technology to aid the blind
- Cockpit devices to promote safety

Education in the United States
- Measures to address linguistic diversity
- Current differences among states' average SAT scores

Current events in the news
- Campaign finance reform
- Roots of the Mideast conflict

Be sure to write down or print out the source of each page of information. You will need to record the source's title and author (if one is listed). Also, if you use an Internet source, record the Web site address, the Web site name, and the date that you retrieved the information.

Your paper should be three to five pages long, double-spaced, with a cover sheet, internal documentation, and a bibliography.

Your paper is due on ________________.

Use parentheses within your text to indicate the source of your information. (See example on sample page of text included here.)

Proofread and edit your paper carefully before you pass it in.

Preparing to Do Your Research

Before you start your research, you should spend some time defining your topic so that you can write about it in three to five pages. Then make a list of questions that you want to answer when you do your research.

For example, "the space program" is not a good topic for research because it is much too broad. You need to narrow it down to something much more specific. You could choose a particular mission or project, and then narrow that down to some aspect about that project. For example, you could research the Apollo 13 Mission.

Pass in a paper with the following information (due date: ________):

Your Name____

1. The topic of your research report.
2. What do you already know about your topic?
3. List five questions you want to answer in your research.
4. What is the intention of your research paper? What are you going to try to show or prove in your paper?
5. What types of sources will you use to do your research?
6. If you plan to do an Internet search using a search engine, such as Google or Yahoo, what words will you search for?

This is a sample cover sheet for a research report. The cover sheet must appear in print like this—no artistic or very large print.

Title of Paper

By

Your Name

English for the 21st Century Workplace

Date

Sample Page of Text

"Let us dare to read, to write, to speak, to think. . . ." President John Adams spoke these words to emphasize the vital role of literacy in a democratic society ("Unlocking the Future," 1).

Democracy, by its very nature, depends upon a literate, educated electorate to make informed judgments about candidates for public office and about issues facing the nation. Noted educator Dr. John Henry Martin summed it up this way: "Literacy may not guarantee freedom, but illiteracy will promote its death" (Martin, 6).

Ironically, after 200 years of commitment to this ideal, illiteracy has become one of the most critical issues facing the United States. National polls and surveys indicate that there are now an estimated 50 million illiterate adults in the United States and an additional 39 million who have great difficulty with reading (Lavin & Sanders, 68). The situation shows little hope of improving, because there is an estimated increase of 2 million in the number of functional illiterates in this country every year.

Sample Bibliography

This is the final page of your paper, where you list the sources of your information in alphabetical order. It is important to follow the correct format here.

Bibliography

Bernardon, Nancy L. "Let's Erase Illiteracy From the Workplace." Personnel. January 1989: 29–32.

Lavin, Richard J., and Sanders, Jean E. "Using Computers as Tools for Reducing Adult Illiteracy." T.H.E. Journal. June 1988: 68–70.

Martin, John Henry. "IBM InfoCourse: Principle of the Alphabet Literary System." Advanced Education Systems. Atlanta, IBM Corp.

"Technology and the At-Risk Student." Electronic Learning. November-December 1988: 35–49.

"Unlocking the Future: Adult Literacy in Arizona." Report of the Governor and Superintendent's Task Force on Adult Literacy. 1986.

For an Internet Source, set up a bibliography entry like this:

Title of item. Author. Date. <http://Address/filename>.

Example:

Guidelines for Better Writing. Vince DiStefano. January 9, 2002.
<http://www.usa.net/~vinced/home/betterwriting.html>.

Introduction to the Internet

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: Applying technology to task; acquiring and evaluating information; organizing information; communicating information; knowing how to learn; demonstrating responsibility; maintaining a positive view of self; approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways; relating to familiar and unfamiliar social situations; locating, understanding, and interpreting written information.

Whether or not your classroom has access to the Internet, I strongly recommend you consider talking to your students about it so that they are aware of what an incredible resource it is. One way to introduce the Internet is to use the assignment on page 237 as one of your weekly essay topics. Even without access, however, students can still read through the handouts "The Internet and You" and "Internet Terminology" and complete the essay assignment.

The Internet and You

What is the Internet?

The Internet is actually thousands of computers that are all over the world in a variety of settings, including homes, businesses, schools, libraries, hospitals, and universities. These computers are connected by telephone lines through a device called a *modem* (see "Internet Terminology" for a definition of this and other words in italics).

How does the Internet work?

Although it was originally referred to as "the information superhighway," the Internet really doesn't exist in a physical form. Telephone lines and modems are used to link together computers from all over the world. When you log in to the Internet from your computer at home or school, you are actually calling another computer that is part of the Internet. This computer is never turned off unless there is a problem with it. When you access this computer, it sends a copy of its introductory screen to your computer screen. This screen is called a *page*. You can move from this page to other pages by using *hyperlinks* that you can activate by clicking on them. The part of the Internet that has these pages and hyperlinks is called the *World Wide Web*.

What can you use the Internet for?

Today most people use the Internet and the World Wide Web as a source of information. It can also be used for playing games, making airline reservations, buying things, reading the newspaper, doing research, taking courses, and sending e-mail to other people who have Internet access.

The Internet has many educational uses as well. For example, you may communicate with and learn from people you would not normally be able to meet. You might also write to students in other parts of the country or the world. Teachers can also obtain information about new programs or products and can talk to educators throughout the country.

Internet Terminology

chat—A form of interactive online communication that allows you to have real-time conversations with others on your computer. When participating in a chat discussion, your messages are instantaneously relayed to other members and their messages are instantaneously relayed to you.

e-mail (electronic mail)—Electronically transmitted messages. E-mail lets you compose messages and transmit them in seconds to one or more recipients anywhere in the world.

hyperlink (or link)—Text you find on a Web site that can be clicked on with a mouse. This will take you to another Web page or a different area of the same Web page.

Internet—The Internet or "the Net" was originally designed by the United States Department of Defense so that communications could withstand a nuclear war and serve military institutions worldwide. This system was first known as the ARPAnet. The Internet is a system of linked computer networks throughout the world that facilitate data communication services such as remote login, file transfer, electronic mail, and newsgroups. The Internet is a way of connecting existing computer networks and greatly extending the reach of each participating system.

modem—An electronic device that enables your computer to access other computers through a telephone line.

online—When a user is connected to a network, he or she is described as being online.

page (or World Wide Web page)—On the World Wide Web, a page can mean several things. The most technically correct usage means a single text file, which when viewed by a browser on the World Wide Web (WWW) could be several screen-dimensions long, meaning you would "scroll" to view contents that are off-screen. If you scroll up and down this page, for example, you will notice more information on it than just what fits in one screen of your browser. All this information is considered to be on one Web page. Large Web sites to have hundreds of pages of information. This means the site contains hundreds of separate documents varying in length.

The term Web page is also used to refer to an entire Web site. You may hear someone say "have you got a Web page?" This usage pertains more to a collection of pages that are housed under one domain name. You may also hear it referred to as a home page. Although a home page is indeed a Web page, it is not quite the same because it is usually the starting point or "front door" to many more Web pages or the Web site.

search engine—A program that acts like a library card catalog for the Internet. Search engines attempt to help you isolate desired information or resources by searching for key words that you specify. The search engine identifies Web sites that include your key words and compiles these sites into a list of hyperlinks that you can review and use to access the sites.

World Wide Web—The World Wide Web or "the Web" is the graphical part of the Internet. The Web was created to support multimedia information, such as photos, video clips, and sound files, along with text.

—Many of the above definitions are adapted from
NetLingo: A Dictionary of the Internet Language
(http://www.netlingo.com/)

Internet Essay Topic

Paragraph 1

Introduction: Describe the Internet and how it works. Make sure to use words from the vocabulary list provided.

Paragraph 2

Discuss some of the things that people can use the Internet to do. Talk about business, personal, and educational uses, and give specific examples of each.

Paragraph 3

What would you use the Internet to do? Focus on uses that are educational.

Paragraph 4

Conclusion: What do you think about the Internet? How often do you use the Internet? How has the Internet affected or changed the world?

Projects for the Real World

Projects for the Real World *has students solve problems using a variety of resources and methods and produce portfolio projects.*

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: Applying technology to task; acquiring and evaluating information; organizing information; communicating information; knowing how to learn; demonstrating responsibility; maintaining a positive view of self; approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways; relating to familiar and unfamiliar social situations; locating, understanding, and interpreting written information.

Consider having students work with one of the many software programs that help them develop the skills they need to solve real-world problems. One such program is *Projects for the Real World* from PLATO Learning, Inc. The brief description of the program below will give you an idea of what you might look for in this kind of software.

Projects for the Real World draws students into stimulating worlds of problem solving where they locate and apply information, identify resources, observe people working in different careers, and make decisions to solve problems and produce results. Students produce portfolio products ranging from letters, charts, and graphs to a fully automated computer slide show. Each unit of this program contains scored lessons that teach and reinforce skills in reading, mathematics, writing, social studies, and science. Levels 4–8 are designed for grades four through adult and provide 20 challenging and interesting research projects, including the following:

State Visitors' Center

> Create a computer presentation showing new ways to present information in the State Visitors' Center. Use resources that include maps of your state and your state flag, capital, tree, flower, and bird. (These resources are provided within the resource center in the software program.)

Climbing Mount McKinley

Help mountain climbers decide if they should climb to the summit to install an anemometer. Learn about climbing equipment, clothing, weather, and emergencies.

Volunteering

Volunteer your time for six projects and decide which kind of work suits you and could give you skills useful in a future job.

All Kinds of Families

Join a Living Traditions ethnic festival in Washington, D.C. Collect data about different families, including their memories, names, and celebrations such as Kwanzaa.

Space Center

Learn NASA's goals and services while participating in a space camp at the NASA Mission Control Center. Actual NASA photos add authenticity to this unit.

This is one of the more comprehensive reading and writing software programs I have seen. When students are asked to complete a writing assignment, they are guided through the steps of the writing process. There are even templates for various forms of written communications, such as the business letter.

Critical Thinking Activities

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: acquiring and evaluating information; organizing information; communicating information; knowing how to learn; demonstrating responsibility; maintaining a positive view of self; approaching thoughts and solutions in new ways; relating to familiar and unfamiliar social situations; locating, understanding, and interpreting written information.

The activities in this section will help your students develop their abilities to distinguish between fact and opinion, read fine print, and recognize propaganda devices. The goal of this section is to help students become discriminating, thinking readers, listeners, voters, and consumers.

Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion

One way to develop your students' critical thinking skills is to have them consider the differences between fact and opinion. Your students will soon discover that they know quite a bit about the differences from having completed the journalism component in the second semester.

Distribute copies of a newspaper and have students read the news stories first and then read the editorials. Discuss the difference in content between these two types of writing. Review the five Ws and one H (who, what, when, where, why, and how) found in most news stories. Remind students that editorials are based on the writer's opinion and include reasons to support the writer's position.

Divide the class into pairs and give each pair of students a topic. Have one of them write facts about that topic, and have the other write opinions on the same topic. Suggested topics might include AIDS, capital punishment, abortion, smoking, drug abuse, and gangs.

Another optional activity is to give students a page of text that includes some paragraphs based on fact and others based on opinion. Ask students to identify which paragraphs are factual and which are opinion.

Reading the Fine Print

One aspect of reading comprehension is the ability to read closely, even if the print is very small. Students may tend to be too trusting of anything that is in print and may tend to ignore text that is small and harder to read. Because of this, it is easier for them to get into situations in which they have committed themselves to paying large amounts of money without their realizing it. For example, they may sign up for a technical school not realizing that it will cost them four times as much as they would pay for the same courses at the local community college. You may want to help your students learn to read the fine print by bringing in forms and contracts and helping them understand how easy it is to be misled if they don't read and understand the entire document.

Recognizing Propaganda

You can also increase your students' critical thinking skills by increasing their awareness of how words can be used to sell products and ideas. Easy lessons in recognizing propaganda permeate life, most noticeably through advertising. Once students understand the many ways words can be used as propaganda promoting a product or an idea, they will begin to recognize propaganda and its devices everywhere.

Provide students with the "Propaganda Devices" handout (page 242) and discuss examples of each device, encouraging students to provide examples as well. Then ask them to look for examples of these devices in television commercials or, if you prefer, political speeches that you provide. Point out the immense power of words and the importance of being able to recognize when these devices are being used so the students can think clearly about an object or idea.

Once you present this list of devices, you might bring in ads from magazines or a videotape with television commercials and ask students to identify the propaganda devices on the tape or in the ads. If it is near an election, record some political speeches and see if they can identify the devices used in these. You may also wish to give them a page with samples of these devices and ask them to identify which device is used in each line.

Turning Euphemisms into Plain English

Students might enjoy learning about euphemisms. A euphemism is a generally less-specific word or phrase that is used in place of a simple word or phrase that is easily understood, but may sometimes be more unpleasant than the euphemism. For example, the phrase "pass away" is often used as a euphemism for the word "die." Business and government documents can provide many examples of euphemistic language. Consider the following examples:

- contributions *instead of* tax increase
- second hand *instead of* used
- downsize *instead of* fire someone
- golden years *instead of* old age
- economic downturn *instead of* depression

Invite your students to identify euphemisms in the media or even create a few of their own so they understand the concept.

Propaganda Devices

Before learning these propaganda devices, it is important to understand the difference between the denotation and the connotation of a word. The denotation of a word is the dictionary definition of the word. For example, the denotation of the word "thirteen" is "a number value." The connotation of a word is a suggested meaning. For example, a connotation of the word "thirteen" is "an unlucky number." The suggested meaning is that the number 13 is unlucky. Many propaganda devices rely on the connotation of a word or phrase.

ad hominem—Attacking the person and ignoring the issue. (Jesse Ventura is a former wrestler; what does he know about politics?)

bandwagon—Suggesting that everyone is doing it.

benefit promising—Promising a benefit if you buy the product. (Buy *Time* magazine, and get a free calculator.)

either/or fallacy—Suggesting that you have only two choices when you actually have many choices. (Either buy this make of car or don't buy a car.)

flag waving—Associating a product with something patriotic. (Skippy—the All-American peanut butter.)

glittering generality—Making a product sound great without saying anything specific about it. (This product is the best.)

non sequitur—Making a conclusion that doesn't necessarily follow from a statement or statements. (With a name like Smuckers, it *has* to be good.)

slogan—Using a catchy or familiar phrase or expression to help people remember a product, service, idea, or organization. (Reach out and touch someone.)

snob appeal—Promising higher social status if you use the product. (For the ultimate in luxury driving, drive Cadillac.) (You deserve the best, don't you?)

stereotyping—Unfairly categorizing people by using incorrect generalizations. (All old people are irritable; all blond people are dumb.)

testimonial—Using a famous person to endorse a product. (Muhammad Ali uses Brut aftershave.)

transfer—Suggesting the characteristics of a product will transfer to the person who uses it. (Angel Face makeup—use the makeup and look like an angel.)

unreliable authority—Appealing to a vague authority. (Leading experts say . . .)

wishful thinking—Promising the impossible. (Use this creme and grow a thick crop of hair.)

Propaganda Devices Practice Sheet

1. List some foods that have names that use the transfer device.

2. Write a line that uses the testimonial device to advertise a soft drink.

3. List the slogans from three products.

4. Write a line that uses the bandwagon device to advertise tennis shoes.

5. Write the names of four automobiles that use the transfer device.

6. Write three examples of stereotypes.

Preparing for Life After Graduation

- Appropriate for all students.
- Develops the following SCANS skills: demonstrating responsibility, maintaining a positive view of self, negotiating to arrive at a decision, allocating time to improve performance.

During the final semester of the program, students should continue to focus on reading and writing skills, critical thinking skills, and workplace skills. You may also want to focus on helping each student define his or her career goals and chart paths to achieve these goals. If you have a mentoring program, the mentors may also work with their students and help them choose and plan for their future careers. (The mentoring program is discussed in chapter 5).

Updating Employability Skills Portfolios

Students need to realize that the employability skills portfolio is an important way for them to highlight their skills and qualifications. Have students update their portfolios and urge them to continue updating their resumes even after they get a job.

Preparing for Postgraduate Activities

Much emphasis should be placed this semester on helping students apply for postgraduate training or for employment. During this process, you may want to discuss how to network, how to obtain the information they need, how to meet deadlines, etc. Encourage students to contribute ideas and advice on succeeding in the workplace. You might even assign these topics to groups of three and have the groups research workplace survival skills and present their findings to the class.

Completing Applications for College or Employment

This is a good time to have students work on completing applications for college, for scholarships or financial aid, or for employment. Having the students bring these forms to class gives them the benefit of your advice and ability to identify errors. Make copies of the blank forms and then have students practice filling them out. When the copies of the forms are filled in correctly, have the students copy everything onto the actual forms. Encourage students to make copies of every form they complete before they mail it. If it is necessary to enclose fees or payments, tell students not to enclose cash in the envelopes.

Establishing a Timeline

Require each student to make a list of important dates and deadlines that he or she must meet during the application process. These may include deadlines for filing for financial aid, mailing applications for scholarships, or submitting applications to a college or an employer. If at all possible, try to have pocket calendars for them donated by a business in the community and teach them how to keep an appointment calendar.

Notes on Sixth Semester

Mock Job Interviews

Research Skills

Introduction to the Internet

Projects for the Real World

Critical Thinking Activities

Preparing for Life After Graduation

Things to Do

Other Ideas

Part III

Appendixes

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A

Adaptations for Other Academic Disciplines

This appendix offers ideas for restructuring the classroom for history or social studies, science, and mathematics classrooms and includes ideas for projects that could incorporate the content material for those disciplines. Some projects or assignments are interdisciplinary. Also included are brief descriptions of experiences I have had with these projects in my own classes. I hope that this section will spark your enthusiasm for becoming involved in classroom reform that better prepares your students for the 21st century workplace.

Restructuring the Classroom

Although the term *restructuring* has been the buzzword in education for the past 15 years, there is very little agreement over what restructuring is or how it should change the classroom. There is, however, general agreement in the literature that effective restructuring involves changing the curriculum, implementing new teaching methods, using performance-based assessment, and creating a new learning environment with new roles for teachers and students. Each of these characteristics is covered in depth in Part I.

Changing the curriculum. Part II provides the English teacher with detailed curriculum guidelines for adapting his or her curriculum to meet student needs and help them develop workplace skills. Many of these activities could be adapted for use with other disciplines.

Incorporating new teaching methods. Chapter 2 presents an overview of effective teaching methods. You may already be using many or all of these methods.

Using performance-based assessment. Chapter 2 also includes a discussion of performance-based assessment. Obviously, your own assessment policy will be based on your respective site requirements. Whatever the form of assessment, it is crucial that all students be able to succeed, regardless of their initial skill levels upon entering your class.

Creating a new learning environment with new roles for teachers and students. These areas are covered in depth in chapters 1 through 3. This appendix provides additional suggestions and ideas for creating a professional learning environment for several core disciplines.

Restructuring the Curriculum

Although the subject matter may vary, a successful curriculum for the 21st century classroom will have many, if not all, of the following characteristics:

1. The curriculum will incorporate SCANS skills (see pages xix–xx).
2. Students will perceive that the curriculum is relevant to the "real world."
3. Students will be active, not passive, learners.
4. The curriculum will include written communication skills.
5. The curriculum will include technology skills, including computer work and the use of educational software.
6. The curriculum will include cooperative learning activities.

7. The curriculum will incorporate critical and creative thinking skills.
8. The curriculum will incorporate interpersonal skills.

Further information on these characteristics is provided in chapter 2.

Suggestions Presented by Academic Discipline

Suggestions for restructuring the classroom and curriculum are provided in the following pages for four core disciplines:

- History and Social Studies (pages 254–260),
- Science (pages 261–270), and
- Mathematics (pages 271–273).

History and Social Studies

Restructuring the Learning Environment

There are many ways you might restructure the learning environment to simulate a professional workplace setting for careers in history or social studies. This section describes two such settings, the publishing company and the research company, and provides a number of activities you might adapt and use within the settings.

Publishing Company

Consider restructuring your classroom as a publishing company that publishes books, board games, and educational software on topics from history and social studies. In this setting, the teacher is the manager and facilitator and the students are professional workers—writers, editors, research associates, etc. Students would research the topics you assign and then work individually or together to

1. write a research report,
2. create an original board game,
3. write and illustrate an original software program,
4. create a newspaper for a day in history, and/or
5. publish a journal by a famous person.

See chapters 1 and 3 for more information on teacher and student roles.

Write a Research Report

You might also assign students to write a report on any topic that you select. Further information on research reports is provided in the sixth semester of the English for 21st Century Employment curriculum outline on pages 227–233.

Create Your Own Game

I have used the Create Your Own Game project in different schools in Massachusetts and Arizona with entirely different student populations, and I am always astounded by the creativity and ingenuity of the students' finished products. Students are required to study an educational or social issue and then create a board game on that topic using recycled materials. Students must also create an original game title; write clear, concise directions for playing the game; and design a box or container for the game. Students are graded on their writing skills, creativity, game packaging, and the overall finished product.

For a few years, I taught in Beverly, Massachusetts, the home of Parker Brothers. The first year I assigned the Create Your Own Game Project, I invited technical writers from Parker Brothers to choose the top three games. It was a wonderful experience for the students. Two technical writers spent several hours one afternoon judging the games. When they returned at a later date as guest speakers, they brought a game that was under development and showed the students how games are developed. They then presented Deluxe Monopoly Games as awards for the three winners.

Local newspaper reporters covered the story with a long article on our games project and the clever, creative ideas the students had incorporated into their games. The games covered a wide range of social and political issues. The object of the "Waste Disposal Game" was to be the first person to dump 10 loads of waste. The game included an EPA truck and stops labeled "police," "breakdown," and "contamination." If you were caught dumping in dark woods or the misty swamp, you were in trouble unless you had purchased "alibi" insurance. The object of another game, "Parental Paranoia," was to advance around the board by successfully handling a number of crises with your children.

The object of the "Waste Disposal Game" was to be the first person to dump 10 loads of waste. If you were caught dumping in dark woods or the misty swamp, you were in trouble unless you had purchased "alibi" insurance.

The game ideas were so good that *USA Today* picked up the story from the local newspaper and published it in their "Across the USA" section. This activity shows that if you give students a project that allows them to be creative and forces them to give their best effort, it is absolutely amazing what they can achieve.

Create a Newspaper for a Day in History

Another assignment you might give students in your publishing company would be to create the front page for a newspaper published on or immediately after a significant date in history, relating the activity to what your students are currently studying. You may wish to divide students into groups and assign each group a different date. Ask each group to include a certain number of news stories, sports stories, feature stories, and editorials that may have appeared on their date in history. Further information on these types of stories are included on pages 147–154.

Students will need to research the events and issues of the time, including sporting events, popular entertainment, and even the prices of items if you ask them to create ads as well. You may want to require them to write at least five or six news stories on events of the day and two editorials expressing their opinions on an issue of the time. Tell them to write the editorials from the point of view of someone who lived at that time.

Publish a Journal by a Famous Person

Have the students pretend to be a historical figure you are studying and write a daily journal documenting the events of the time from that figure's perspective. An alternate activity is to have students write a journal from the perspective of a person living at the time of a historical event. You can have students write in their journal every day for 2, 3, or 4 weeks, or whatever time period you select.

Several years ago, one of my students pretended to be a close friend of John F. Kennedy and wrote a creative, interesting journal about his years at Kennedy's side. He used Microsoft Bookshelf for research, and he was extremely insightful as he described the events of Kennedy's life from the days of his command on board PT109 through his assassination.

Interdisciplinary Assignments

Consider extending the board game or software program assignments to develop student understanding in other disciplines, including English, mathematics, and economics. A few of these extensions are described below.

1. Students could identify the target markets for their products and create advertisements and packaging for those markets.
2. Students could estimate the cost to manufacture or publish their product and calculate the number of items they would need to sell to break even or make a specified profit.
3. Students could practice allocating human resources (one of the SCANS skills) if you chose to assign them job titles, salaries, and a budget for their product. Students would then have to decide how to best allocate their resources to complete the product under budget and on time.
4. Students could consider the export/import equation in business by calculating the effect of purchasing some production materials from a foreign source at a lower cost but then having to pay import taxes and other variable costs, such as the changing value of the American dollar against a foreign currency.

Working in Cyberspace

You may also decide to assign some of the members of your students' project teams to regional offices in the United States and/or in several foreign countries. Team members working in different offices will then need to communicate with each other via e-mail, giving your students practice using this means of communication. One way you can heighten the realism of this e-mail correspondence is to ask mentors if they would mind responding to an e-mail message from one of these students as though they were a member of the student's project team.

Practicing Interpersonal Skills With Businesspeople

Students could also practice their interpersonal skills by presenting their games to publishers for possible publication. The "publishing executives" could be volunteers from the business community. Students could demonstrate their games or explain how the proposed software would work.

Students would need to provide the volunteer executives with a portfolio of information, descriptions, sketches, cost of production, estimated profits, etc., for their products. Students would discuss these materials with the businesspeople during their presentations.

Research Company

Another option is to restructure your classroom as a research company. Any material or topic in your curriculum could become a topic for student research. The research results could then be written into reports, presented orally, or written as proposals for products to be developed based on the research. In this setting, the teacher is the manager and facilitator and the students are professional workers—research associates and writers. Students would research the topics you assign and then work individually or together to

1. present a proposal for a motion picture,
2. design a time capsule and determine its contents, and/or
3. participate in a model United Nations meeting.

Present a Proposal for a Motion Picture

Ask students to make an outline for a 2-hour motion picture depicting a specific event, era, or issue. Along with the movie's storyline and possible cast of characters, have students determine what effect they want the movie to have on its audience. Other questions students could consider include the following:

- What are some of the events you would include in the movie?
- How would you begin the movie?

- How would the movie end?

Design a Time Capsule

Ask students to research a specific time and then list items that might represent that time and be included in a time capsule. Students could consider items from the following categories:

- Entertainment and the arts (music, books, movies)
- Current events
- Famous (and infamous) people
- Issues of the day (women's rights, the depression of the 1930s, etc.)

Students should also design their time capsules and decide where the capsules should be buried.

Participate in a Model United Nations Meeting

Identify a number of topics and issues and then assign students as United Nations representatives to different countries. Have each student research his or her country over a period of several weeks until he or she has an understanding of that country's needs and positions on the topics and issues you identified at the beginning of the assignment. Then hold a model United Nations meeting. Students should come to the meeting prepared to discuss the assigned topics as a representative of the country he or she has chosen or been assigned. If possible, try to schedule the meeting in a room in which the chairs or tables can be arranged into a circle or an oval. Have each student make a nameplate with his or her name and the name of the country he or she researched. Elect a Secretary General.

In addition to developing the students' research skills and their abilities to access and use information, this activity helps students develop their interpersonal skills and increase their appreciation of cultural diversity. Students also have to prepare for oral communication. All of these are skills from the SCANS list of skills for the 21st century worker (see pages xix–xx).

Enhance Your Curriculum With Carmen Sandiego

One of the most educational software programs on the market is the Carmen Sandiego software series. These include the following titles:

Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?

Where in the USA Is Carmen Sandiego?

Where in America's Past Is Carmen Sandiego?

Where in Europe Is Carmen Sandiego?

All of these programs require that students learn about geography, culture, arts, music, food, and other topics in order to catch the notorious criminal Carmen Sandiego.

Students use the almanac, the world map, other reference books provided with the software, and clues from the program to find Carmen Sandiego and obtain a warrant for her arrest. The abilities to solve problems, think critically, and follow directions are all developed when students use these software programs.

Science

Restructuring the Learning Environment

The science classroom could be restructured to simulate many of the workplace settings students might encounter if they pursued careers in science, including a research laboratory, a research company, or an environmental consulting firm. The following activities may be most appropriate if the learning environment is restructured as a scientific research company.

Research Company

Consider restructuring your classroom as a research company that conducts experiments, does original research, and publishes the findings in lab reports, internal research reports, articles for scientific journals, and educational software programs. In this setting, the teacher is the manager and facilitator and the students are professional workers—writers, editors, lab assistants, and research associates. Students would research the topics you assign and then work individually or together to complete activities in the UFO Project described below, including

1. writing and creating a report,
2. writing an article for a scientific magazine, and/or
3. writing and illustrating a software program.

See chapters 1 and 3 for more information on teacher and student roles.

The UFO Project

Because of its largely unresolved, mysterious nature, the topic of unidentified flying objects (UFOs) can motivate students to think critically, make inferences, engage in problem solving, conduct research, discuss hypothetical situations, and communicate their ideas orally or in writing. Through these activities, students seek answers to the following questions: Do

Connect Your Students to Science on the Internet

Whether your students are studying the hole in the ozone layer or AIDS research, they will find significant amounts of information on these and other topics on the Internet. One particularly rich site is maintained by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration at www.nasa.gov. The site has areas for both students and educators.

UFOs exist? Is there life on other planets? If so, what would that life be like, and what might life on Earth seem like to other life-forms? Most students will be fascinated by the possible answers to these questions and will eagerly participate in the following activities, which are based on activities and lessons I developed with Dr. Richard Haines of the NASA Ames Research Center; John Schuessler, an aerospace engineering manager; and Dr. Michael Swords, a professor of natural sciences at Western Michigan University.

What do newspapers reveal about life on Earth? Divide the class into groups of five or six students and give each group a foreign language newspaper. Have the students imagine that they are crew members from an extraterrestrial spacecraft that has just landed on Earth. The only sign of intelligent life they can find is a newspaper (which they should not be able to read, but which you or someone you know should understand well enough to know what the pictures are of).

Ask students to look through the newspaper and analyze the pictures and other elements of the newspaper in order to learn as much as possible about life on this planet. Students could cut out the pictures and write captions that reflect the students' interpretations of the pictures. Students should try to examine the pictures as though they had never seen such images before. After the groups have analyzed the newspaper, ask them to compose a written report for their commanding officers on their home planet explaining what they have observed about life on this planet.

This exercise will help students perceive their world differently and require them to draw inferences from the pictures and think creatively. At the end of the activity, share the pictures and captions with all of the groups. Discuss how accurate the students' perceptions of these pictures are, and emphasize how easy it is to arrive at an incorrect conclusion when you do not have enough information.

UFO or IFO? Because the average person is not a trained UFO observer, about 90% of the objects reported as UFO sightings are eventually explained as IFOs, or identified flying objects. These objects may be conventional aircraft, weather balloons, hot-air balloons, satellites, planets, lenticular clouds, light reflections, meteors, and even insects. In this activity, students are given a copy of the UFO or IFO? handout provided on the following page and asked how they would investigate each sighting in an effort to identify the flying objects.

IFOs may be conventional aircraft, weather balloons, hot-air balloons, satellites, planets, lenticular clouds, light reflections, meteors, and even insects.

Discuss with your students the kinds of flying objects that could mistakenly be considered UFOs (e.g., helicopters or meteors). Have students create a list of questions they could ask the witness or witnesses of the sighting in order to obtain specific information that might help them identify the object. You might caution students to word their questions with care so they avoid influencing the witness's responses. The following example may help your students understand this concept:

Description of object:
Avoid: "Was the object shaped like a disk or a cylinder?"
Preferred: "What did the object look like?"

Students should also be asked to separate the facts of each case from any conjectures or conclusions that may have been included by the author or witness in the reporting of the case. Have the students write about their investigation as a lab report, research report, article, or in another format of your choice.

UFO or IFO?

Sighting Report

A cigar-shaped craft was sighted by a computer technician and aviation enthusiast at 8:40 a.m. on March 11, 2001. A second witness in the area reported that he saw what he described as a cigar-shaped object slipping through the sky beyond the treeline behind his house. He described it as being approximately a quarter of a mile away at about 1,000 feet in altitude. The object was white along the top length and black along the bottom. It looked like an aircraft fuselage, but it had absolutely no wings, vertical or horizontal stabilizers, or any other appendages of any kind. It was completely silent. He added that he knew this because it was a crisp, clear morning and he could hear other sounds coming from a nearby small airport.

Sighting Report

A chemistry teacher reported seeing UFOs every night betweem 9:00 and 10:00 p.m. for 6 days in April. He captured the objects on videotape. The tape revealed large bright orange objects. Four of these orange balls appeared one at a time and formed a nearly straight line. There is also a cylinder-like object clearly visible in the video. It appears as one object and looks like it is slowly rotating. Another object is seen below the cylinder. The cylinder has about eight lights in a tight formation. It disappears from the video as the object suddenly vanishes.

Sighting Report

Several witnesses stopped their vehicles on the highway to observe an elongated, disc-shaped object with three white lights at 10:23 p.m. on May 16, 2001. Two women, both in their 20s and returning home from a movie, reported that they saw a red light rotating behind the stationary white lights.

Sighting Report

Two witnesses in New England were heading home from work at 4:30 p.m. on February 3, 2002, on a cold, windy evening just as the sun was setting. They saw something hovering above the trees near Route 26. A large object about the size of a baseball at arm's length was observed. It was silver and had a dark stripe running the length of the object from the bright light at the top to the bottom. They estimated that the object was 500 feet high and a mile away.

Sighting Report

On March 18, 2001, at 11:00 p.m., three students walking outside the student union building on a university campus observed a hovering, bright light in the western sky. They described it as an orange light about 30 degrees above the horizon. It was motionless. As they observed it, it suddenly changed shape and dropped very low. Then, after 10 seconds, it changed shape again to a series of red and blue lights. They commented that the UFO lights did not appear to have any "glare" about them, and there was no noise at all. They said the lights flew away toward the east.

How would we react to contact from another world? The 1996 motion picture *Independence Day* implies that if Earth were faced with a threat from an extraterrestrial civilization, all the nations would put aside their differences and unite to fight the invaders. The following activity requires students to consider how they, and the population of the world in general, might react if the government announced that UFOs have been identified as spacecraft from a civilization that is far more advanced than the one on Earth. How would human beings react to the news that they are not alone, but are being visited by an advanced civilization? Who would be the most shaken by this announcement?

Provide your students with a copy of "Discovery and Resistance" on the following page and then ask them to conduct research into other important discoveries throughout history that were received with resistance by the people at the time. What inferences can the students make about how society responds to change in general and to whether the change is perceived as generally positive or negative? What inferences or generalizations can they make about the people who made these discoveries? Do they share common characteristics? Can students see any relationship between this information and the current level of support for the United States space program from Congress and from American citizens?

Have the students write about their investigation as a lab report, research report, article, or in another format of your choice. You may prefer instead to give students a list of topics related to scientific advances and have them select a topic from the list for a research paper. Additional information on research papers and sample pages are included on pages 227–233.

Discovery and Resistance

Throughout history new discoveries have often been met with resistance and even ridicule from people living at that time. For example, Columbus met with strong resistance when he claimed that the Earth was round. Copernicus faced strong opposition to his discovery that the sun, not the Earth, is the center of our solar system. Ironically, even scientists have often been reluctant to accept new ideas. Consider the following statements, adapted from *The Experts Speak* by Christopher Cerf and Victor Navasky (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984):

> In 1610, on hearing of Galileo's claim that his telescope had permitted him to see "moons" circling the planet Jupiter, Francisco Sizzi, an astronomy professor, summed it up this way: "Jupiter's moons are invisible to the naked eye and therefore can have no influence on the Earth, and therefore would be useless, and therefore do not exist."
>
> Dr. Lee DeForest, inventor of the radio tube, was quoted in the February 25, 1957, issue of the *New York Times* as saying that man will never reach the moon "regardless of all future scientific advances."
>
> Upon assuming the post of British Astronomer Royal in January 1956, Dr. Richard van der Riet Wooley declared that "space travel is utter bilge."

In 1961 NASA commissioned the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., to study the topic of space exploration. Brookings published its findings in a 1961 report titled "Proposed Studies on the Implications of Peaceful Space Activities for Human Affairs." The report included the following statement:

> It has been speculated that, of all groups, scientists and engineers might be the most devastated by the discovery of relatively superior creatures, since these professions are the most clearly associated with the mastery of nature, rather than with the understanding and expression of man. Advanced understanding of nature might vitiate all our theories at the very least, if not also require a culture and perhaps a brain inaccessible to earth scientists. Nature belongs to all creatures, but man's aspirations, motives, history, attitudes, etc., are presumably the proper study of man. It would also depend, of course, on how their intelligence was expressed; it does not necessarily follow that they would excel technologically.

What would be your response if an advanced extraterrestrial civilization were discovered?

Make your own E.T. life-form contest. The following assignment develops creative and critical thinking skills as well as interpersonal skills and oral presentation skills. Students will also learn to see things in the mind's eye. In addition, they will participate as members of a team and will communicate information in writing. All of these are SCANS skills (see pages xix–xx). Divide students into project teams of four students each and ask each team to make an extraterrestrial life-form using recycled or other materials. Have the students consider the list of questions on "Creating an Extraterrestrial Life-Form" and determine what their life-forms will be like. Each project team will make a model of their life-form and will also prepare a written report describing its characteristics and the environment on its planet.

Consider assigning each person on the project team an area of responsibility. One student could be the facilitator, responsible for ensuring the project is finished on time; two students could be production associates, responsible for creating the model; and another student could be the writer, responsible for creating the report. All team members should participate in imagining the life-form, making the model, writing the report, and participating in a panel discussion about their models as a part of the contest.

The models, written reports, and panel discussions can be judged on their originality, the appropriateness of the model's features for survival in its environment, and overall effort and thought exhibited by the project.

Creating an Extraterrestrial Life-form

Create a model of an extraterrestrial life-form based on your answers to the following questions:

1. What does it look like? What do its features tell you about its environment? Is its environment a warm, hot, or cold place?

2. How does it move? What is its posture (does it stand? does it walk on all fours?)? Is there strong gravity on its planet?

3. What senses does the life-form have? How does it see? What does its ability to see tell you about its environment? Is the environment dusty, bright, clear, dark?

4. How does the brain of your life-form compare to the human brain? Is it larger or smaller? (Assume that your extraterrestrial being comes from a more technologically advanced civilization.)

5. How does your life-form communicate? Does it have a mouth, or does it communicate in another manner, such as telepathically?

6. What size is your being in comparison to the average human? How much does it weigh? What does its body look like? Does it have a head and appendages (arms and legs)?

7. How does it grasp objects? Does it have feet? What do the feet (if any) tell about the type of terrain on its planet?

Connect Your Students to Scientific Workplaces

You can also bring working scientists into the lives of your students through guest speakers and career shadowing activities.

Guest speakers. Guest speakers from science and technology companies can give your students insight into their future careers. Many students will be preparing for careers that do not even exist now, but will exist in the future. Invite professionals in the science and technology sector of your local economy to speak with your students about the types of career opportunities that may be available to them and about how your students can best prepare for those careers.

Career shadowing. Locate scientific businesses and organizations in your community and investigate the possibility of having your students spend time with their employees. This activity could give your students a firsthand look at jobs in their areas of interest and help them plan their careers. For more information, see chapter 5.

Mathematics

Restructuring the Learning Environment

Because mathematics has applications in many careers, you could restructure the learning environment to simulate a wide variety of workplace settings, from a Wall Street brokerage firm in New York City to an insurance sales office in Corvallis, Oregon. The following activities are designed for a classroom restructured as a manufacturing company.

Manufacturing Company

Consider restructuring your classroom as a manufacturing company that designs and manufactures several kinds of products. In this setting, the teacher is the manager and facilitator and the students are professional workers—product designers, marketing research analysts, and mathematical associates. See chapters 1 and 3 for more information on teacher and student roles.

Students could demonstrate their mastery of mathematical concepts and skills by compiling a portfolio of their work and then presenting it to you. For example, you might have weekly performance reviews for the students to present their mathematics portfolios to you and explain how they completed their assignments.

You could also divide your students into project teams and hold a weekly company meeting each Monday. During the meeting, you can identify which project teams will be presenting their portfolios to you on Friday. This would allow you to review every student's portfolio every other week or so.

Create Simulations

You can also create simulated projects for your manufacturing company in order to teach specific skills and concepts. Two possible simulations are described on the following page.

Growing pains. The manufacturing company is expanding and needs to hire more people and move to a larger facility. You and your students are responsible for making the necessary calculations and providing mathematical information for the company president to use in her decision-making process. Devise a math problem for your students that involves the cost of hiring a certain number of workers at a specified amount per hour, plus benefits, etc. Have your students calculate the cost involved in this expansion of your workforce.

The second part of the problem could involve geometrical calculations to determine how many more square feet of space the company needs in its new facility and how much the additional square feet will cost. Design a math problem for this situation, and incorporate the concepts and skills you want your students to learn.

Price wars. Your competitors are lowering their prices in an effort to undersell you. The manufacturing company needs to determine how much it can lower its prices and still make a profit. Design a math problem for your students that represents this situation. You may want to complicate the problem by having students also consider how the price could be changed if the products are sold in large numbers or are sold in states with a high sales tax.

Travel Agency

Consider restructuring your classroom as a travel agency that arranges travel for special groups or expeditions. In this setting, the teacher is the manager and facilitator and the students are professional travel agents. Using the agency as your setting, create math thought problems, such as the one provided below, that require your students to apply the mathematical concepts you want them to master.

A group of archaeologists has hired your company to arrange a tour of Egypt for them. Furnish your students with a page of data and have them calculate such things as the cost of the airfare if they receive a 25% discount for booking a large group. Also have them calculate the amount of

American currency each person should take in order to have a specified amount of Egyptian currency. Provide students with information on the time difference between your location and Cairo and then ask them to determine what time they would have to call from Cairo in order to reach their parents at home. You might also give your students a problem that requires them to calculate frequent flyer mileage for their round-trip flights if the airlines are giving passengers an extra 1,500 frequent flyer miles for this trip.

Appendix A
Adaptations for Other Academic Disciplines

Restructuring the Classroom

Restructuring the Curriculum

B

Preparing for High-Stakes Tests

High-stakes graduation tests are different in every state, so you must be sure to become familiar with the test required by your state and to include in your curriculum the appropriate lessons and strategies that will address the areas covered by the test. In addition, most school districts give their teachers sample questions and information on test-taking skills. Also, your state's Department of Education probably has a web site with a sample graduation test. You may want to have your students practice by using this test.

Helpful Strategies and Assignments for Test Preparation

The following strategies and assignments will help to prepare your students for various sections of high-stakes tests.

Reading Strategies

Making inferences, predicting outcomes, and distinguishing among facts, opinions, and feelings. These skills are almost certain to be included in high-stakes and graduation tests. The reading comprehension software programs *Basic Skills for the Real World* and *Job Skills for the Real World* (PLATO Learning, Inc.) help to develop students' ability to make inferences, predict outcomes, and distinguish among facts, opinions, and feelings. Both of these programs are highly effective. If you select a different reading comprehension program, choose one that will help your students perform as highly as possible on the graduation test.

Read one paragraph at a time, identify the main idea, and paraphrase the paragraph. You can also improve students' reading comprehension and retention skills by teaching them to stop for a moment after each paragraph and determine its main idea, and then mentally put it into their own words. They should repeat this process for each paragraph when they are reading for information or for academic assignments.

Ask students whether they have ever finished an assigned chapter and not had a clue what it was about. Inevitably, students will raise their hands. Tell them that using this strategy will improve their understanding of the material and will also help them to remember it.

Regularly scheduled times for silent, sustained reading (SSR). Research indicates that regularly scheduled time for silent, sustained reading (SSR) in class will help students to improve their reading and will also help them to enjoy reading more. Reading, like playing an instrument or a sport, requires a great deal of practice. Make sure to have in your professional workplace classroom several books, magazines, and newspapers that are written at varying reading levels and are appealing to your students. Many students have no quiet place at home to read with any privacy, and often do not have any books to read that are at their reading level and interest or appeal to them. Giving students time to read materials of interest to them in class will show them that reading can be an enjoyable experience, rather than a frustrating, painful one. The more they read, the better their skills will become. This will translate to greater success in all subject areas and on standards-based tests.

Using context clues. I have had a great deal of success teaching context clues as a way for students to figure out the meanings of words, expressions, or sentences that they do not understand. Using newspaper articles that relate to topics of interest to the students is one strategy. For example, an article in *USA Today* (April 18, 2001) with the headline "Wearable PCs: A Different Kind of Fashion Statement," by Kevin Maney, captured my students' attention and interest and provided a good opportunity to teach the use of context clues to improve one's reading comprehension.

The belt is one thing. What's on my head is quite another. It's a headset built on a big cushiony set of earphones. An arm sticks out from it, hovering in front of my right eye. In the arm are a microphone and a screen about the width of a quarter.

Looking at the screen is like taking one of those eye tests where the optometrist puts the big lens wheel on your nose and asks you to say when things look blurry. Except when I peer into the Xybernaut screen, I see—Windows!

Several of my students were not familiar with the word *optometrist*, which is not surprising, since many of them have never had their eyes examined, except by the school nurse. By looking at the sentence and asking who would administer an eye test with lenses, they were able to figure out that an optometrist is an eye doctor.

Later in the article, the author states that if he were seen in the local supermarket wearing that equipment, neighbors might avoid him for months. He adds:

But Xybernaut isn't deterred by the apparent ridiculousness of wearing a computer.

Many of my students did not know the meaning of the word *deterred* but were able to infer from the rest of the sentence that it meant discouraged.

Using prefixes and root words to decode the meanings of words. Vocabulary sections on standardized tests often require students to select one of four or five words that is closest in meaning to the underlined word in the question. If the student is not familiar with any of the possible answers, then a knowledge of prefixes and root words can be very helpful.

A list of some suggested prefixes and root words is included on the next two pages. A great cooperative learning activity is to go over these prefixes and root words (10 per week) starting every Monday. Show the students how to use these prefixes and root words to figure out the meanings of many words without having to use a dictionary. For example, in the word *circumvent*, *circum* means around, and *vene* means to go. Combining these roots, we can see that the word means to go around. Have students work in pairs and quiz one another on the meanings of the 10 prefixes and root words given each week. When you quiz them on Friday, give a pair bonus points if both members score 80% or better.

Prefixes and Root Words Study Sheet

ab (away)	abduct, abscond
ad (to)	adhere, adhesive, adventure
ami (friend)	amiable, amicable, amity
amore (love)	amorous
ante (before)	antecedent, antedate, anteroom
anti (against)	antifreeze, antigravity, antisocial
aqua (water)	aquanaut, aquarium, aquatics
astro (star)	astronaut, astronomer, astronomy
bene (good)	benefactor, benefit, benevolent
bi (two)	bicycle, bilingual, biped, tricycle
bio (life)	biology, biosphere, biotic
cardiac (heart)	cardiac arrest, cardiologist
centi (hundred)	centimeter, centipede, century, percent
circum (around)	circumference, circumspect, circumstances
cogn (to know)	cognition, cognizant, recognize
contra (against)	contraband, contradict
corp (body)	corporal, corps
cosmos (universe)	cosmonaut, microcosmos
crac (rule)	aristocracy, democracy, theocracy
cred (believe)	credence, credible, incredible

deca (ten)	decade, decathlon
demo (people)	democracy, (also **popul** means people—e.g., population)
dent (tooth)	dental, dentist, orthodontist
dermis (skin)	dermatitis, dermatologist, epidermis
dict (speak)	contradict, diction, predict
dis (out of)	disconnect, disinterested, dislocate
dyna (power)	dynamics, dynasty
ex (out)	exit, exterior, external
extra (outside)	extracurricular, extraneous, extraterrestrial
fac (make)	artifact, factory, manufacture

fid (faithful)	fidelity, infidelity
flex (bend)	flexible, reflex
graph (writing)	autograph, polygraph
here (to stick)	adhere, adhesive, coherent
hetero (different)	heterogeneous, heterosexual
homo (same)	homogeneous, homogenized
hydro (water)	hydroelectric, hydrogen
inter (between)	intermediate, international, interpersonal
intra (inside)	intramural, intravenous, introspect
junct (join)	adjunct, conjunction, junction

juris (justice)	jurisdiction, jurisprudence, jury
latera (side)	bilateral, quadrilateral, trilateral
magna (great, big)	Magna Carta, magnanimous, magnificent
mal (bad)	malevolent, malfunction, malignant
mand (command)	mandate, mandatory
manu (hand)	manual, manufacture, manuscript
micro (tiny)	microbe, microcomputer, microscope
milli (thousand)	milligram, millimeter, millipede
mini (small)	miniature, miniscule, miniskirt
mit (to send)	remit, submit, transmit

multi (many)	multifaceted, multitalented
naut (explorer)	astronaut, cosmonaut, nautical
octa (eight)	octagon, octopus, octave
ortho (straighten)	orthodontist, orthopedist
ped (foot)	pedal, pedestal, pedestrian
pend (hang, weigh)	pending, pendulum, suspend
penta (five)	pentagon (**quin** also means five—e.g., quintuplets)
peri (around)	pericardium, perimeter
phobia (fear)	acrophobia, claustrophobia, hydrophobia
phone (sound)	megaphone, microphone, telephone
porta (carry)	portable, porter
post (after)	postpone, postoperative, postgraduate
pre (before)	preheat, prehistoric, preview
pro (for)	pro bono, proponent
pseudo (fake)	pseudo-intellectual, pseudonym, pseudopod
quad (four)	quadrangle, quadruped, quadruplets
retro (backward)	retroactive, retrospect
scrip (write)	manuscript, prescription, subscript
spect (see)	circumspect, inspect, spectators
sub (below)	submarine, substandard, substitute, subway
super (greater than)	superman, supermom, supernatural
tact (touch)	contact, intact, tactile
tele (far, distant)	telegraph, telephone, telephoto, television
terra (earth, land)	terra cotta, terrarium
trans (across)	transcontinental, transfer, transoceanic, transportation
tri (three)	triangle, tricycle, triplicate
vene (come, go)	circumvent, intervention
ver (truth)	veracity, verify
vox (voice)	vox populi
zoo (animal)	zoo, zoological, zoologist

Preparing Students to Recognize Literary Elements and Figures of Speech

If your state requires students to be familiar with literary elements and figures of speech, provide your students with study sheets. Students will need some memory devices to help them remember these terms. In many cases, the term itself is self-explanatory, such as the figure of speech *personification* (to give human-like qualities to something inhuman or inanimate). An example is *My locker spoke to me and told me to clean it.* Point out to the students that the word *personification* contains the word *person.* Sometimes the word sounds like a word that prompts the definition. For instance, *simile* is a comparison of two unlike things using the words *like* or *as.* It is like saying that one thing is *similar* to another. *Similar* sounds like *simile.* A list of figures of speech is contained in the poetry segment (page 183) in Semester 4 of this curriculum. If your state's exam requires students to recognize propaganda devices, see Semester 6 (page 242) for these terms.

Writing Skills

Business writing. This curriculum places a very heavy emphasis on written communication skills and essay writing, as well as on business writing—including business letters, memos, resumes, and research papers. As they progress through the curriculum, students will write weekly essays, proceeding through the steps of the writing process. This is all covered in depth in this curriculum.

In my state, the AIMS test (Arizona Instrument of Measuring Standards) requires students to write a business letter, a memo, and a persuasive essay. I have my students write several of each of these during the school year. Be sure to have your students practice writing the types of essays and business writing required on your state's standards-based test.

Using Volunteers to Help Students Prepare for Standards-Based Tests

One of the most helpful things you can do to give your students more individualized attention is to recruit excellent volunteers for your classroom. I have had many volunteers over the years, including Air Force pilots, retired professionals, bankers, an attorney, an optometrist, two professionals who were attending college to earn teaching certification, a computer tech, two employees of the information systems department of a large medical center, university students, and retired teachers. I mention their backgrounds here to illustrate the wide range of careers represented by volunteers who have been tremendously helpful to my students and to me in the classroom.

It is a challenge to help students who are reading well below grade level to improve their skills and performance significantly so that they will have a much better chance of passing the graduation test.

As mentioned in chapter 2, research indicates that students will learn best when the teacher sets high expectations for students and shows them that he or she believes that they can achieve those expectations. Also, students learn best when caring, supportive adults encourage them to achieve to their fullest potential and when there is a sense of community in which students feel respected and are treated with dignity. Volunteers can play an important role in creating these conditions and in helping to set students up for success.

Volunteers can help students improve their skills and academic performance on high-stakes tests in many ways. For example, sometimes students may not clearly understand the teacher's corrections and comments on their essays. In these instances, volunteers can sit with one student at a time and explain the comments and markings, discuss why the corrections are needed, and explain to the student how to make the changes in the final draft of the essay. In addition, volunteers can read a selection with one student or a small group of students, and then lead a discussion on it. It is also very helpful if the volunteer shares with the students what he or she is thinking while reading the passage. If a student is having a difficult time answering a question at the end of a passage, the volunteer can remind him or her of which strategies to use to figure out the answer. Most students enjoy the individualized attention that volunteers can provide.

Before you enlist volunteers for your classroom, be sure to check with your school administrators regarding any requirements for volunteers. Some schools require that they be fingerprinted. Most schools require that they sign in and out on a special volunteer register in the main office. If your school doesn't have an official volunteer application, create one of your own and have them complete these. Be sure to keep them on file.

Challenges of Computers in the Classroom

Having a learning environment with a computer on every student desk creates a tremendous opportunity for you and your students to improve both teaching and learning, and for you to attend to individual differences while enjoying greatly increased student/teacher interaction.

Along with this opportunity come some new challenges. This section will discuss two of those challenges and offer some practical suggestions for solutions. The two challenges discussed here are

1. obtaining technical support for your computers, and
2. preventing computer-related visual distress in your students and yourself

Obtaining Technical Support for Your Computers

Coping with a shortage of district computer support staff. The shortage of computer technical support in school districts across the country has become increasingly widespread, primarily because school districts cannot match the salaries offered by industry for computer technicians and network managers and technicians. There is often a high turnover of staff in the information systems and instructional technology departments of many school districts. It can sometimes take weeks to get a district computer support tech into your classroom to correct a computer problem.

Where does that leave you as the teacher of a classroom with a computer for each student? You must learn a great deal about troubleshooting the simpler computer problems, and, at times, finding your own computer support technicians to address those problems that you cannot troubleshoot.

When your computers are new, they will be covered by a service warranty for about a year. It is highly recommended that you include in the purchase of the computers the purchase of 2 or 3 additional years of on-site service.

Request that virus protection software be loaded on all of your computers.

Regular maintenance. While your computers are covered by warranty, you should try to learn as much as possible about maintaining them in order to prevent some problems. Be sure to ask the district if they have a district license for virus protection software. If they do, request that it be loaded on all of your computers. You will then need to download updated virus protection files every week or two in order to keep your protection current.

If you are running a version of Microsoft Windows on your computers, then learn how to run Disk Defragmenter and ScanDisk, and do so every month on your computers. This helps the computers to run more efficiently and conserves space on your hard drives. Also, learn how to find temporary files and delete them every couple of weeks, as this also saves space on the hard drive and makes the computer run more efficiently.

Volunteers. We have already discussed the value of volunteers in helping students improve their academic performance, especially on the standards-based graduation tests. They can also troubleshoot simple computer problems and keep your computers running smoothly. You can train volunteers to do the regular maintenance tasks mentioned in the previous paragraphs. It can be very helpful if experienced volunteers help you troubleshoot more complex computer problems.

Over the years, several volunteers have made my life much easier. Some of them worked in the computer field; one works in the managed care industry; three were university students studying computer science or programming; one is an Air Force pilot; and one is a retired business manager. You need not attempt to recruit volunteers with computer-related careers. Of the volunteers who work with you, you will probably find a few who are very good with computers and can help maintain the computers in your classroom.

Business partnerships. If you have a complex one-time task that needs to be done, such as loading programs onto your file server, you may be able to arrange for one of your business partners to lend you a computer tech or two for a day.

Keeping pace with changing technology. Because technology today is changing so rapidly, it is crucial that you look ahead constantly and plan to replace outdated hardware and software as needed. Computers seem to be obsolete in about 3 years, and software is continually being upgraded to run on the newest computers with the most current versions of Windows. Therefore, if you replace your computers, you may find that the reading software that ran quite well on your previous set of computers will no longer run on your new computers. If you replace your reading software but keep your computers more than 3 years, you may find that the new version of reading software you purchase will be upgraded and might not run on your older computers.

This constant effort to keep pace with changing technology presents a challenge, especially in finding funding for upgraded software and new computers. However, the alternative will eventually be to bring your program to a halt. Thus, teachers in today's computerized learning environments must become the CEOs of their classrooms and take the initiative to ensure that their computers and software remain current.

Trends for keeping pace with changing technology. Chapter 3 suggests some sources for obtaining computer equipment. If you are able to convince your district or school to lease computers rather than purchase them, then you will be able to trade them in for new ones every 2 or 3 years.

A new trend in the educational software market seems to be toward running software from the Internet and charging customers a fee for usage. This will eliminate large outlays of funds up front and allow districts or schools to pay as they go. If this becomes commonplace, as predictions seem to indicate, it will eliminate the need for teachers to purchase upgrades of the software programs they use with their classes. As upgrades are produced, teachers will automatically receive them.

Preventing Computer-Related Visual Distress

Preventing visual distress and discomfort caused by computers. Learning is significantly affected when students are experiencing discomfort while reading or working at a computer. Headaches, blurred vision, neck and back discomfort, decreased concentration, glare problems, light sensitivity, double vision, fatigue, and dry eyes are just some of the subjective complaints of computer users. An astute teacher can recognize these while observing his or her students.

Sustained reading and computer use often elicit complaints of visual distress from students. Discomfort can result from difficulty focusing on the reading material or from the discomfort of the chair and the ergonomics of computer use. Problems can also arise from glare on the computer screen or brightness from a nearby window, or even from the reflections of the painted walls or other distractions in the room. Some students may also experience vision-related problems and stress caused by the task at hand.

The human eye was not designed to work at a computer. Reading and computer use require work from the eye to focus. Head tilting, squinting, poor posture, avoidance of the activity, excessive clowning around to avoid working, sitting too close to or too far from the computer monitor, and eye rubbing are all outward signs of visual distress.

What Is The Teacher's Role?

What is the teacher's role in identifying the student who might be having vision or positioning problems that are interfering with learning?

- Observing each student to detect a pattern of suspicious posture or behavior
- Conversing with the student about your observations
- Making adjustments to work areas
- Referring the student to an appropriate professional for evaluation, if necessary

If you notice some of your students having difficulty at the computer or while reading, consider the possibility of vision problems, and consider what your first steps will be.

Some adjustments you can make include the following:

- Reposition computers that are affected by too much glare in the room from lighting or sunlight. In many cases, you need not move the computers. Merely turn the monitor and equipment to face another direction.
- If possible, paint the room off-white rather than bright white. This will decrease the glare on computer screens.
- Put shades on the windows or cover the windows with reflective film, which decreases the glare in the room.
- If there are any exposed bulbs in light fixtures, cover them with shades.

Vision complaints are not normal, and should be dealt with by a vision professional. A referral to an optometrist or an ophthalmologist may result in eliminating what may have first been perceived as a learning problem.

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Software Publishers

The products mentioned in this curriculum guide are available from the following software publishers:

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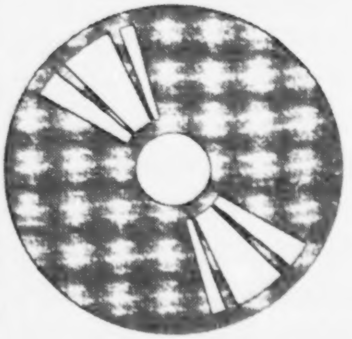

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About *Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment* and the National Educational Service

The mission of the National Educational Service is to help create environments in which *all* children and youth will succeed. *Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment* is just one of many resources and staff development opportunities we provide that focus on building a Community Circle of Caring.

Learn directly from the author of *Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment.* Marge Christensen Gould offers 3-day teacher training seminars in Tucson, Arizona, in the summer, as well as 2-day on-site seminars for groups of educators interested in creating programs based on the one outlined in this book. If you would like further information, please contact the National Educational Service at 1-800-733-6786.

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Education / Literacy / Technology

Developing Literacy & Workplace Skills

Teaching for 21st Century Employment

Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills: Teaching for 21st Century Employment is designed to help all students experience success in school and in the real world. A flexible, six-semester curriculum that builds literacy skills in students while developing their core worker competencies, *Developing Literacy and Workplace Skills* recognizes the classroom as a professional workplace setting. It outlines reorganizing the classroom as a professional workplace setting, using computers as central tools of instruction, and involving the community and mentors.

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School District of Greenville County, Greenville, SC

Marge Christensen Gould, M.Ed., is a high school English teacher with 29 years of experience in the classroom. For 15 years, she has taught and coordinated this innovative literacy and workplace skills program at an urban, multi-cultural high school. Christensen Gould was named to the All USA First Teacher Team 2000 by *USA Today*.

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